

# WINTERFINDER

A PATHFINDER FANZINE MADE BY FANS FOR FANS



LANDS OF THE LINNORM KINGS

VOLUME NO. 6: WINTER 2011 | NOT FOR SALE



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## FOREWORD

# THE LEGEND OF THE LINNORM KINGS

In many ways, the Lands of the Linnorm Kings were the very first elements I ever designed for the Pathfinder world. Years before Paizo launched the Pathfinder Adventure Path line, in the middle of our run on *Dragon* and *Dungeon* magazines, I began to tinker with rough ideas for what would become an original campaign setting for my personal fantasy roleplaying campaigns. Up to that point I'd set most of my Dungeons & Dragons campaigns in Gary Gygax's venerable World of Greyhawk, and while I wanted something different than my traditional gaming turf for my own original creation, I knew that certain aspects of Greyhawk were important to the type of world I wanted to design. In order to "sell" the world to my players, I knew I needed to root elements of my setting to the myths and history of the real world, at least in broad strokes. Being of Norwegian descent and having grown up as a football fan in Minnesota, first and foremost I knew my new setting would have to have vikings.

Greyhawk had its own viking lands, of course, in the form of the various northeastern barbarian kingdoms of the Flanaess. As interesting as these lands were, I never really used them in any of my various Greyhawk campaigns. They had a lot of potential, but they were too distant from the "core" lands to demand a lot of my creative or tabletop attention. I was far more likely to set games around the central city of Greyhawk, the Bandit Kingdoms, or other juicier locales. But what if the viking barbarian lands were the central part of the campaign?

At around this point I was freelancing *Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk* for Wizards of the Coast, and I approached that product like it would be the very last official Greyhawk material I would ever write. In order to keep myself sane, I essentially divorced my mind from the campaign setting I loved so much, and began to focus on other things. I kept coming back to the viking homeland idea, and eventually sketched out a rough map and several ideas in a graph-paper notebook. I needed a cool name to frame the region, and came up with the idea of rulers proving themselves worthy of command by slaying mighty Norse dragons. Thus were born the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, years before I'd ever thought of the word Golarion, or even the idea that there would ever be a brand called Pathfinder that demanded a world of its own. I added some notes about a neighboring kingdom ruled by a witch queen and her children (riffing heavily off the White Queen from the Narnia books), and kept working on the idea here and there as the basis for a new campaign I might run at some nebulous time in the future.

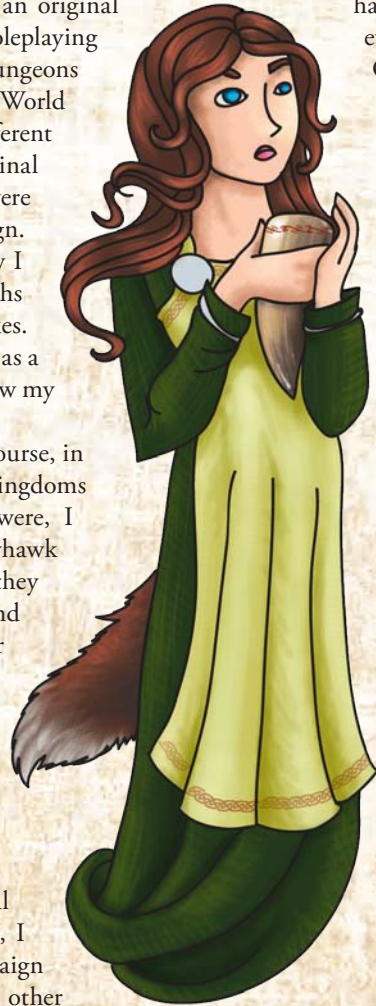
That campaign never happened, but in a couple of years' time the magazines were dead and buried and Paizo was off on a new

adventure. James Jacobs, Wes Schneider, and James L. Sutter were hard at work fleshing out Varisia (based heavily on one of JJ's old home campaigns) for the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path, leaving me and Jason Bulmahn to flesh out the bones of the rest of the world. We held several group brainstorming sessions to decide what types of countries would go into the world, and from the very start I threw the Linnorm Kingdoms into the mix, partly because I wanted to put more work into the semi-abandoned idea, and partly because my purple and gold Minnesotan blood would have revolted had I not used my powers of publisher fiat in this manner.

So when it came time to sort brainstorm notes into the *Pathfinder Chronicles Gazetteer*, the first look at the new campaign world, the Lands of the Linnorm Kings were one of the first locations on the map (that's probably one reason why they're so close to Varisia, another early inclusion). I wrote them up for that book, and have watched their development closely in the years since. I even made my favorite Pathfinder character, the barbarian Ostog the Unslain (23 game sessions and still no armor!), from the Linnorm Kingdoms, and I was pleased to recently publish a complete sourcebook based on the kingdoms. Many other hands have contributed to the official Lands of the Linnorm Kings since I created them, but I feel like a proud father when I look at what they have become today.

Looking over the galley proofs of this issue of *Wayfinder* brings me a similar sense of pride. Way back in my Greyhawk days, before I ever had an official credit in a professional roleplaying product, I had the honor of editing one of the internet's original RPG fan publications, the venerable *Oerth Journal*. A product of early online Greyhawk fandom, the *Oerth Journal* featured articles on diverse topics related to the World of Greyhawk. I contributed several articles, and edited issues 2 through 7. Visually speaking, these were the days before PDFs, and our offerings were simple text-based affairs. But the passion we shared as we planned, wrote, and edited our issues is the same exhibited here in these pages. The Lands of the Linnorm Kings have come a long way, and internet fan magazines have come a long way, too.

It's been my pleasure to create and publish the original Lands of the Linnorm Kings material, but it's been even more fun to see what they have become at the talented hands of Paizo's freelance authors and artists. It's even more fun to see what you, the Pathfinder fans, have done with my creation, because I understand the passion that goes into a project like *Wayfinder*. I know what it's like to put long hours with no pay into a labor of love like this, and I'm humbled to see what my creation has become in your talented hands. Thank you one and all!



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erik Mona".

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# ICE AND DARKNESS

BY KALYNA "LIGHTSPRITE" CONRAD

ART BY FRANK NESSEFORT

"'mon runt," Bram taunted, blond braids dangling as he leaned over the rocky outcropping Liut was still struggling to climb, "You're embarrassing me."

Scowling, Liut pushed aside his pain and climbed faster. He may have been only eight to his brother's eleven, but he was just as worthy of becoming a warrior, and he would prove it. Bram had only let him tag along if he swore to keep up, so keep up he would. With no friends of his own, Liut was always keen to spend time with his brother's tight-knit circle.

He hauled himself up and over the ridge with one last effort. Bram, Oleg and Aerick stood a ways off with their backs to him, peering down a large hole. The frosty ground around the opening was mounded waist-high, as though some huge burrowing creature had left it there when it tunneled into the frozen ground.

Curiosity blotting out physical exhaustion, Liut scurried over to the others. "What'd you think's down there?" he whispered, trying not to sound winded.

Aerick shot him a haughty look, "It's a linnorm hole, stupid."

Liut shrank back. "Is there really a linnorm down there?"

"Of course not," Bram laughed, "it's abandoned... but you could always go down and see for yourself if you're curious."

"I dunno..." Liut mumbled, biting his lip. "Looks dangerous."

"Don't be ridiculous," Oleg snorted, "It's perfectly safe."

"What's the matter?" Aerick jeered, "Are you too much of a baby to-"

"I'll do it," Liut snapped, cutting Aerick off.

The boys gaped at him.

"Really?" Bram asked.

Not allowing himself time for doubt Liut pushed past the others and threw his legs over the edge of the hole, making his way down the icy, sloped wall with surprising ease.

Halfway down, as he threw his head back to send his brother a triumphant smile, he slipped. He slid down, unable to stop his bumpy descent into the dark unknown.



He hit the bottom with a tooth-jarring slam. "Liut?" his brother's distant voice called, his face no more than a dark speck against the tiny spot of sky above. "You okay?" "Yeah," Liut replied, glancing around, "at least there's nothing down -"

His words died in his throat as something glinted in the darkness. Two glowing, frost-coloured orbs appeared in the shadows, accompanied by a low growl.

"H-Hello?"

The creature's huge maw opened with a dangerous purr, revealing sharp white fangs. *Ulfen child, why do you disturb my domain?* its hissing voice demanded inside Liut's head.

"I slipped," he replied, refusing to show fear as the linnorm slithered into the light. He frowned. It seemed smaller and somehow less... snakelike than he'd imagined. And why hadn't any of the tales mentioned that linnorms had wings?

*I can see that, and I should kill you for intruding. However, I have never enjoyed killing wyrmlings. Instead, I will offer you a bargain, young one.*

Liut threw back his shoulders. "I'm not young. I'm almost nine."

The creature made an odd chuffing noise that sounded like a chuckle. *Very young. Now will you take my bargain or not?*

"What would I have to agree to?" Liut asked warily.

*It is simple. You will agree to be my servant, and in return I shall raise you as my champion.*

Liut's heart leapt. To finally be a true warrior, no longer mocked for his weakness but feared for his strength? He didn't hesitate. "I'll do it."

*Not even a thought for your family? Your tribe?*

Liut laughed bitterly, thinking of the disappointment in his parents' eyes every time they looked at him. "They've got my perfect brother, they won't miss me."

*Very well then. So be it.*

"Brother?" Bram's voice intruded, "You still okay? Aerick's getting a rope."

Before Liut could reply, the dragon pushed past him, icy scales scraping his face. *No goodbyes*, it said, barreling up the tunnel with a deafening roar.

The boys screamed as the linnorm broke the surface. In the ringing silence that followed, Liut heard the frantic rustling of their retreat.

Satisfied, the creature returned to Liut. *I am called Iceheart*, it said with the faintest of toothy smiles.

"I'm Liut," the boy offered.

*A fine name for a champion.* Iceheart grinned. *I will make you more powerful than your wildest dreams, young one... Now come, we must leave this place before your foolish kin return.*

The dragon moved further into the tunnel and Liut followed, entering into his new life without a thought spared for the one he was leaving behind. 🐉





# WEAL OR WOE: ICE AND DARKNESS

BY ERIC "BOXHEAD" HINDLEY AND  
KALYNA "LIGHTSPRITE" CONRAD

ART BY FRANK NESSEFORT

## WEAL: BRAM SEGISMUNSSON

The eldest son of Jol's best blacksmith and armorer, Bram was born strong and handsome. By age ten his skill at arms was unmatched in his village and it was widely believed that he would become one of the next great Linnorm Kings.

At the age of eleven, he suffered a cruel tragedy when his beloved younger brother Liut was stolen by what Bram's young mind took to be a linnorm. He blames himself for his brother's disappearance and spends his time collecting adventurers willing to work for a share of linnorm treasure. Once he amasses a party, he leads these brave souls deep into the Grungir forest in search of his brother. Legends say he killed many linnorms, wearing a tooth from each around his neck as a trophy, but since he has never returned with a head it is impossible to prove.

Blond haired and blue eyed with a tall, muscular physique and honey-tinted skin, Bram is open, friendly, and boastful while recruiting. Once out in the wilds however, he becomes harsh; demanding only the highest standard of excellence from any party he leads—even if he may not always live up to that same standard. Though he favors his axe, named for his lost brother, he is equally skilled with any weapon. He typically refuses to fight other humans, but gladly trounces anyone who speaks ill of his brother.

Bram also has a bit of a secret. While tales of his prowess as a monster hunter are embellished, spread far and wide by everyone he meets, he has never actually encountered a linnorm, nor does he even know what one truly looks like. Most of the fangs hanging from his necklace come from lesser monsters—remorhazes, ice drakes, yetis and similar beasts.

### Hooks:

- Bram recruits the PCs to aid on his latest monster hunt, but finds he has bitten off more than he can chew, and

leaves them to their fate.

- The PCs hear Bram disappeared on his latest trek, and the locals beseech the party to find the missing legendary warrior.
- The heroes hunt a deadly monster and seek Bram out for help, little realizing his skills do not quite match his reputation and bravado.

## BRAM SEGISMUNSSON

CR 8

Male human fighter 9

NG Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception -1

### DEFENSE

**AC** 24, touch 12, flat-footed 22; (armor +9, Dex +1, dodge +1, shield+3)

**hp** 90 (9d10+36)

**Fort** +8 **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** *Liut's Vengeance* +15/+10 (1d8+15, 19-20/x3)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +11/+6 (1d8+5, x3)

**Special Attacks** weapon training (axes) +2, weapon training (bows) +1

### TACTICS

**During Combat** Bram is a straightforward attacker, advancing to melee and using his favorite axe. Bram uses Power Attack (included).

**Morale** If an opponent overpowers Bram or he is reduced below half hit points, he considers fleeing, leaving his newfound party to the fate of the monster.

**Base Statistics** When not using Power attack, Bram's attacks are as follows: +18/+13 (1d8+9).

### STATISTICS

**Str** 19, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24

**Feats** Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Greater Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Improved Critical (battleaxe), Power Attack, Shield Focus, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe)

**Skills** Intimidate +13, Ride +7, Swim +4 (+16 unarmored)

**Languages** Common, Ulfen

**SQ** armor training 2

**Combat Gear** *Liut's Vengeance* (+1 dragon bane battleaxe), heavy steel shield, full plate, masterwork composite longbow (+4 Str), arrows (20); **Other Gear** fur cloak (10 gp), ivory drinking horn (300 gp), necklace of monster fangs (25 gp)

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Boon** Associating with Bram grants players a +2 on Knowledge checks to identify monsters, as they are exposed more and more tales of his expertise as a monster slayer—





not so much from Bram himself, but from the endless parade of people sucking up to his celebrity.

### WOE: LIUT ICEFANG

Weak and frail as a child, Liut always felt like an outsider. He felt like a disappointment to his parents and his tribe, and yearned to be lauded as a strong warrior, just like his perfect older brother, Bram — though there was little chance of that, given his physical limitations.

His desperate envy of his older brother's strength and charm left him open to less than honorable means of achieving his goals. At the tender age of eight, his life changed forever when he agreed to turn his back on his people and enter into the service of a creature he thought to be a linnorm named Iceheart. The beast in question was in fact a white dragon who, sensing a moral flexibility and latent sorcerous potential in the young Ulfen, took him under his wing to train as his personal champion.

Dark haired and dark eyed, Liut's frosty skin and wiry frame hide a supernatural strength. He wields his blade, Icefang, with the lethal precision of a highly-trained warrior. Growing up in the Grungir forest with his patron, Liut displays a savage ferocity in all his actions after years of surviving in the wild. He doesn't care for the company of other humans, venturing into towns infrequently and only on orders from his master.

Liut is unaware of his natural magic. The dragon has hidden the truth from him in an attempt to control him. He casts spells— or 'prayers', as he knows them— without truly understanding what he's doing. As a child he consumed some of Iceheart's blood and has recently started showing draconic traits, which he hides out of fear of Iceheart's reaction.

He is brave to a fault and still believes he has much to prove, in spite of his many conquests. Liut will always fight first and talk later, never backing down from a challenge unless Iceheart specifically commands it. While bound to fight only on orders from (or in defense of) his master, once engaged he will fight to the death. Generally his foe's death.

Though very few people who encounter Liut live to tell the tale, there are still many legends and much speculation about the dark, mysterious and deadly stranger.

#### Hooks:

- The PCs seek the lair of a local monster with Bram and come across Iceheart's territory, forcing Bram to confront what his brother has become.
- Liut has been haranguing a local village on Iceheart's behalf, forcibly collecting tribute from them. The village hires the PCs to

drive off the dragon-fuelled warrior.

- A true linnorm threatens Iceheart's lair, a beast so ferocious the dragon doubts Liut's abilities to defeat it alone. Iceheart recruits the PCs to help Liut fend off the monster.



### LIUT ICEFANG

CR 9

Male human barbarian (totem warrior) 6/sorcerer 1/ dragon disciple 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +6; **Senses** Perception +12

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 23, touch 17, flat-footed 21 (armor +6, deflection +1, Dex +2, natural +2, rage -2, shield +4)

**hp** 106 (9d12+1d6+40)

**Fort** +10 **Ref** +7, **Will** +7; +1 against fear, paralysis, sleep

**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; Resist cold 5

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** *Icefang* +14/+9 (2d6+7/19-20) and bite +7 (1d4+2)

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (30-foot cone, 4d6 cold, DC 13), rage (16 rounds/day), rage powers (animal fury, dragon totem [white], intimidating glare)

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 3rd, concentration +4)

1st--(6/day) *endure elements*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *true strike*

0-- *detect magic*, *light*, *prestidigitation*, *resistance*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Liut casts *shield* if aware of impending combat.

**During Combat** Liut opens combat using intimidating glare. He fights with his greatsword and uses animal fury to add a savage bite attack. He manifests his claws and improved bite only if disarmed. If the opportunity arises, he uses *true strike* and then makes an attack using Power Attack.

**Morale** Liut is a fanatic and fights to the death.

**Base Statistics** Without *shield* and rage, Liut's statistics are: **Str** 16, **Con** 14, **Will** +5, **AC** 21, perception +11

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +8, **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24

**Feats** Arcane Armor Training, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

**Skills** Knowledge (arcana) +11, Intimidate +13, Linguistics +1, Perception +12, Ride +11, Swim +13

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Ulfen

**SQ** blood of dragons, bloodline (draconic [white]), fast movement

**Combat Gear** *Icefang* (+1 adamantite greatsword), +2 mithral chain shirt, *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *ring of protection* +1; **Other Gear** fur cloak (10 gp), leather necklace with a single dragon's fang (100 gp)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Drawback** Drawing Liut's attention (and generally that of his patron dragon) causes the party no end of trouble as the dragon jealously defends his territory, marking the party for torment and extermination. ☹



# A COLD REUNION

BY LARRY "LARCIFER" WILHELM

ART BY TANYA SANGSNIT  
SILVIA GONZALEZ

MAP BY LIZ COURTS

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Long ago, the envy between two brothers led a young boy named Liut to forsake his kinsmen and swear fealty to a dragon named Iceheart. After many seasons, and much indoctrination from Iceheart, Liut raided his former village to procure slaves for his master.

During the raid, the town's hero, and frequent drunk, Bram Segismunsson stood frozen in drunken stupor as he witnessed his estranged brother's return and subsequent betrayal. The shock of the event caused Bram to pass out. When he awoke, Bram hastily tracked his brother to a glacier called Icehome. Before delving into the glacier's frigid walls he sent a message back to his village. Without another thought he pursued his brother.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure opens with the PCs stumbling upon the seemingly abandoned village of Winter's Breath. As the PCs investigate, a group of weary Ulfen emerges from a barricaded central hall. Their leader, Asta the Sheppard, beseeches the PCs to travel to a glacier called Icehome where several of her people are held against their will. Asta continues that just over a week ago their local hero, Bram Segidmunsson, went to liberate her kin, but he failed to return.

Arriving at Icehome, the PCs discover a sacred frost giant necropolis entombed within the ice. Here, Asta's people toil to unearth this frozen crypt. An adult dragon named Iceheart and his prodigy, a human named Liut, oversee the slaves' excavations. From there, the PCs have the opportunity to explore an ancient necropolis, infiltrate its icy rubble, and emancipate Asta's people.

## ICEHOME

The temperatures within Icehome fall well below freezing. Treat the entire mapped area as severe cold weather (below 0 degrees Fahrenheit; see the *Pathfinder Core Rule Rulebook* pg. 442). Icehome has several torch sconces that if lit, cast the necropolis at the dim level of light. Unless stated otherwise, the walls are sheer ice (hardness 0 and 3 hit points per inch of thickness) and the ceilings stretch to a towering 65-feet.

To set the scene, read or paraphrase the following:

A great crevasse tears into a massive ice wall granting passage into the glacier known as Icehome. Within the glacial rift, a massive rime-covered statue depicts a snarling frost giant guarding a fallen comrade. Wrapping around the statue's base, a strange script coils

in an eerie serpentine pattern. Ahead, a colossal staircase provides an entrance to a grand structure beyond.

A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the statue as having religious significance, but to whom is unclear. The staircase has five massive steps that each rise 5-ft. to a total of a 25-foot rise to the chamber beyond. Due to the stairs' icy nature they require a DC 10 Climb check to successfully scale. Any PC who can read Giant, make a DC 25 Linguistics check, or cast *comprehend languages* can decipher the script coiling around the statue's base. It reads, "Great Jarls, return upon your death to Icehome".

## 1. Gallery of the Dead (CR 10)

A macabre gallery displays several long-dead frost giants sheathed in ice. Each ice-caked corpse strikes an eternal, menacing pose. Varied levels of decay mar the organic statues from near perfect preservation to complete hoarfrost covered skeletons. At the chamber's far end, a roar of rushing water reverberates off the crystalline walls pouring a wisp of fog that nestles the floor in an ethereal blanket.

Nineteen organic statues decorate this gallery in varied states of decay. An unseen waterfall causes fog to flow into this chamber at a height of 2 ft.

**Creatures:** Four of the more hoarfrost-covered specimens (marked with an "x") are in fact skeletons referred to as "the fallen". Originally placed here to deter trespassers, these ancient dead attack anyone not openly displaying a blasphemous symbol to the demon lord Kostchtchie.

### THE FALLEN (4)

CR 6

XP 2,400 EACH

frost giant skeletons

NE Large undead (cold)

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10





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**DEFENSE****AC** 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 natural, -1 size)**hp** 63 each (14d8)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +9**Defensive Abilities** DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune cold, undead traits**Weaknesses** vulnerability to fire

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**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** greataxe +18/+13 (3d6+13), or 2 slams +18 (1d8+9), or 2 claws +18 (1d6+9)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

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**TACTICS****Before Combat** The fallen remain perfectly still hoping to lure their targets into melee combat. A DC 20 Perception check allows any PC to notice a twitch of unnatural movement and act in the surprise round.**During Combat** The fallen mindlessly attack their nearest target; however, if their target enters area 2, they do not pursue them.**Morale** The fallen fight until destroyed.

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**STATISTICS****Str** 29, **Dex** 11, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 30**Feats** Improved Initiative**Languages** Common, Giant**Gear** chain shirt, greataxe

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## 2. The Frozen Flow

A massive waterfall roars into a thick river of slush. Several large

chunks of ice bob within the frigid underground river offering a precarious path into the glacier. A freezing mist reduces vision to 30 feet in all directions.

To the west, a raging waterfall feeds this underground flow. Partly frozen, the waterfall rises 250 feet to a series of channels where the midday sun melts the outer aspects of the glacier causing the water to fill this subterranean stream. The calm waters reach a depth of 10 ft. Any PC who enters the flow takes 3d6 points of cold damage for every round they remain within its chilly waters (A DC 20 Fort save halves this damage).

Several crude chunks of ice float a top this flow offering a hazardous path to the yawning eastern expanse. A DC 15 Jump check allows the PCs to move from icy platform to icy platform; see ice effects (*Pathfinder Core Rule Rulebook* pg. 442). If a PC fails their Jump check, they must make a DC 20 Reflex save or splash into the icy water. PCs within the water must make a DC 10 Climb check to scramble onto an icy platform.

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## 3. Ancient Effigies (CR 10)

As the mist clears, six titanic statues carved out of the glacier's interior loom over the river in silent reverence. Three frosty effigies adorn the north shore and three stand on the opposite shore, facing their eternal brothers. Each effigy depicts a unique, regal figure.

The six carved statues stretch up the wall to a neck-straining 150 feet. Obviously depicting jarls of some importance, their identities remain a mystery lost to the passing of several centuries.

**Traps:** Each statue wields a massive, wicked looking warhammer,

---

### Player map





and when any PC passes under their eternal vigil, the statue's arm slams down with a murderous thud.

**TITANIC WARHAMMER TRAP (6)** **CR 5**

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30

**EFFECTS**

**Trigger** location (see area marked on map); **Reset** automatic (1 hour)

**Effect** Atk +20 melee vs. a single target within the trap's area of effect (2d4+6/x4)

**4. Iceheart's Lair (CR 11)**

A great longship struggles against the creeping frost that threatens to entomb it forever. Half encased in ice, and half exposed to the elements, this longship rests in a dual state of preservation and decay.

A tarnished nameplate adorns the stern of this oversized ship; it reads in Giant, "Ice-Reaver". A DC 15 Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (local) check recalls a legend of a terrible frost giant named Leena who raided the northern coastline along the Broken Bay. Encased in ice and splendidly preserved, sits the ship's figurehead—a buxom maiden with pale blue skin who stares dispassionately into the ice before her.

**Creatures:** Using the massive ship as his lair, Iceheart lies within its hold, resting atop his ever-growing hoard.

**Treasure:** All of Bram Sigismunson's gear is located here (see pg. 3). Furthermore, piled in various denominations and mints are coins worth 4,500 gp., one large masterwork silver shield with a raging giant's face etched on its front worth 550 gp, 4 aquamarines (worth

500 gp each), and a 20-foot tall gilded picture frame depicting giants battling a great white dragon wrapped all around (worth 700 gp).

**ICEHEART** **CR 11**

**XP** 12,800

Rime-coated adult white dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 100, *Wayfinder* 6 9)

**hp** 175; see pg. 9

**5. Kostchtchie's Altar**

A blasphemous statue of an immense, deformed frost giant with twisted legs, tiny eyes, and a thick, matted beard leers into an outstretched hand. The hand, massive enough to hold an ox within its cupped palm, is stained with several reddish-brown splotches that resemble a stylized "K". A great ice-caked warhammer occupies his other hand, its mammoth head cresting the slushy waters as its bulk lies submerged along with the lower aspects of his massive legs.

A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the statue as a representation of the demon lord Kostchtchie—the Deathless Frost. Furthermore, a DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the purpose of this terrible altar. In its glory days, worshipers of Kostchtchie would show their daily obedience to their cold lord and receive his abyssal boons.

The dorsal aspect of this statue-altar is secured within the glacier, and a DC 15 Perception check allows the PCs to notice several outlines and shadows of other structures well beyond the milky ice curtain. Several giant-sized dwellings rest deeper within the glacier entombed within its icy prison.

**GM map**





**Treasure:** AC DC 15 Perception check notices a faint blue sparkling from the altar's eyes. Fixed within the sunken hollows rest 2 blue sapphires worth 1,000 gp each.

## 6. Piercing the Necropolis

Along the southern shore of the ice floe, several large chunks of excavated ice and snow float around a newly created opening. Beyond the opening, another set of colossal stairs rises into an ancient ruined city. Like before, a DC 10 Climb check is needed to clamber these icy, oversized stairs.

## 7. Slave Pens

**Creatures:** Twenty exhausted humans huddle pathetically around makeshift shelters and meager fires that struggle to burn. These desperate folk eagerly beg the PCs for their salvation. If the PCs agree to help, the slaves tell them about Liut (**area 8**) the strange cold aura (**area 9**), and the cyclopean doors (**area 10**). If asked why they have not attempted to escape, they simply state, "Where would we go? Without fire we would succumb to exposure."

**Story Award:** If the PCs return Asta's flock back to Winter's Breath, reward them as if they defeated a CR 8 creature.

## 8. Ice Tower (CR 9)

A great ice-encased tower casts a shadow over the ancient ruins below. A sole staircase provides access into the spire's interior. A bas-relief depicts a scene of pillage that sprawls along the tower's outer walls.

Once the PCs enter the tower, read the following:

A hearth casts this chamber in a warm, red glow. Plush carpets, soft furs, and an immense four-poster bed fill this otherwise empty room.

**Creatures:** Liut torments his wounded brother Bram who he has strapped to the bed. Liut prepares Bram for an offering to the altar in **area 5**. If the PCs stealthily enter the spire, allow Liut a Perception check to notice their approach. However, Liut suffers a -5 penalty on his Perception check due to his enraptured state. As the PCs engage Liut, Bram begs them to spare his brother.

### BRAM SEGISMUNN SON CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 90 (currently 0 staggerd); see pg.3

### LIUT ICEFANG CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 106; see pg. 4

**Treasure:** Liut's gear (see pg. 4).

**Story Award:** If the PCs save Bram, reward them as if they defeated

a CR 8 creature.

## 9. Abandoned Excavation Site (CR 8)

An abandoned, frost-covered worksite emits an eerie chill. The slaves avoid this area with abject terror claiming the site is haunted due to a deadly drop in temperature and unexplained deaths. Rather than exhaust his supply of slaves, Liut moved the excavation to the south, where he successfully exhumed the cyclopean doors (**area 10**).

**Creatures:** Two glacier toads protect their nest, which sits on an ice shelf some 10-ft. above the ground (located with a DC 20 Perception check). Several nooks and notches allow the toads to jump to their nest with ease. A DC 15 Climb check allows a PC to reach the shelf. Several natural chutes provide underwater access to area 2 where the toads feast on fish and aquatic vegetation. However, the toads have developed a taste for human flesh with the arrival of the slaves.

### GLACIER TOAD (2) CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 73 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 268)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The toads rely on their bitter cold aura to subtly kill their prey, but once discovered, they swallow a victim and jump to their lair to digest their meal.

**Morale** The toads fight until reduced below 20 hitpoints. At this time, they flee into the chutes that lead to area 2.

## 10. Cyclopean Doors

Two enormous statues depicting frost giant women carved from blue chalcedony flank an impressive 40-ft. wide by 60-ft. tall double door. The doors themselves are two impressive slabs of soap stone that showcase a haunting carving of a frost giant jarl sailing into his afterlife.

Strangely, these doors lead to nowhere. The space beyond them is clearly visible and fully excavated. A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or

Knowledge (planes) check recognizes these doors as a portal to some unknown, distant location. How to open the doors, or even activate the portal, is either lost forever or buried under miles of ice.

**Treasure:** While enormous, the two statues are worth only 500 gp each.

## CONCLUSION

With Iceheart and Liut defeated, the PCs can return the abducted villagers back to Winter's Breath. What the PCs do with Icehome is up to them. Feel free to use this site as a series of exploration adventures or an ongoing campaign. Several exploits await the PCs. What becomes of Bram and Liut? How much of the necropolis still lies embedded in the ice? Where do the cyclopean doors lead? And, what revenge waits the village of Winter's Breath when the frost giants learn of the trespass upon their sacred necropolis?





## Rime-Coated Creature

Rime-coated creatures hail from the cold regions of northern Avistan. From the gelid waters of the Iceflow to the frozen tundra of the Thunder Steppes, Rime-coated creatures thrive in the lands of ice and snow. Rime-coated creatures embrace their frosty natures and create a physical barrier between their icy hearts and the outside world. Masters of biting chills and numbing cold, these ice-entombed denizens wreak havoc upon their winter wastelands.

### Creating A Rime-Coated Creature

“Rime-coated creature” is an inherited template that can be added to any living or undead corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature) with the air, water, or cold subtype, as long as it does not have the fire subtype.

A rime-coated creature uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**CR:** Same as base creature +1

**Size and Type:** Size and type are unchanged, but the creature gains the cold subtype if the base creature did not already have it.

**Speed:** For each movement type the base creature possesses (except flight), decrease the speed by 10 feet (minimum 10 feet). If the base creature has a fly speed, reduce it by half and decrease the maneuverability by 1 step (e.g. from perfect to good, good to average, and so on).

**Armor Class:** The rime-coated creature is covered in a sheet of white, milky ice that freezes to the outer surfaces of the rime-coated creature’s exterior. This icy barrier improves the creature’s natural armor class by +2 over that of the base creature.

#### Special Qualities:

The rime-coated creature retains all the base creature’s special qualities and gains those described here.

**Icwalking (Ex):** This ability works like *spider climb*, but the surfaces the rime-covered creature climbs must be icy. It can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to make Acrobatics checks to run or charge on ice.

**Meld into Ice (Su):** This ability works like *meld into stone*, but the surfaces the rime-coated creature melds into must be ice or snow. This ability can be used for a number of minutes per day equal to its Constitution modifier (for creatures with the undead type, use its Charisma modifier instead).

**Abilities:** Change from the base creature as follows: Dex -2 (minimum 1), Con +4.

**Environment:** Any cold.

## Sample Rime-Coated Creature

### ICEHEART

**CR 11****XP 12,800**

Rime-coated adult white dragon (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary* 100, *Wayfinder* 6 9)

CE Large dragon (cold)

**Init** +4; **Senses** dragon senses, snow vision; Perception +22

**Aura** cold (5 ft., 1d6 cold damage), frightful presence (180 ft., DC 17)

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 28, touch 10, flat-footed 28 (+19 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 175 (13d12+91)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10

**DR** 5/magic; **Immune** cold, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 21

**Weaknesses** vulnerability to fire

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., fly 100 ft. (clumsy), swim 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +20 (2d6+10/19-20) 2 claws +19 (1d8+7), 2 wings +14 (1d6+3, tail slap +14 (1d8+10))

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (40-ft. cone, DC 21, 12d4 cold)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 13th)

At will—*fog cloud*, *gust of wind*

**Spells Known** (CL 1st)

1st (4/day)—*shield*, *true strike*

0 (at will) *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ray of frost*, *mending*

#### TACTICS

##### During Combat

Iceheart is cunning and prefers to fight from a distance before engaging in melee combat. If anyone wields fire, he becomes enraged and focuses his

assault on the flame wielder.

**Morale** Iceheart fights until reduced below 25 hit points, he then attempts to flee and fight another day.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 25, **Dex** 10, **Con** 25, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 31 (35 vs. trip)

**Feats** Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

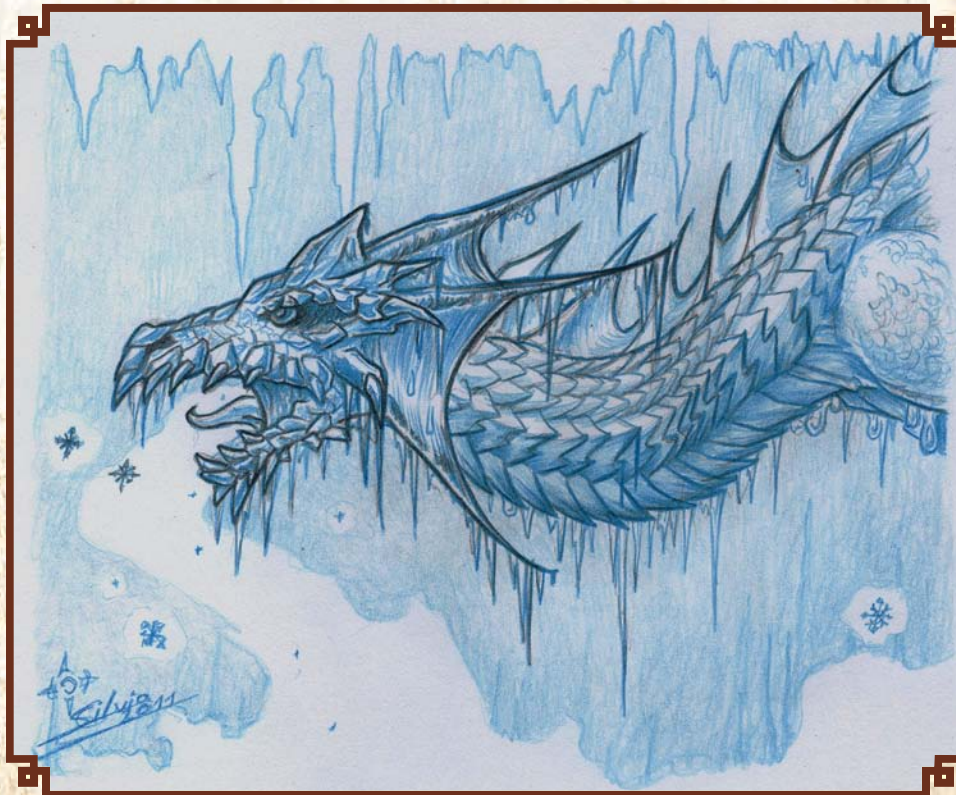
**Skills** Fly +10, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcane) +17, Perception +22, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +12, Swim +31

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**SQ** icwalking, ice shape, meld into ice (7 minutes/day)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Meld into Ice** ☉







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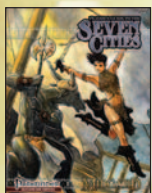
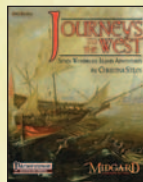
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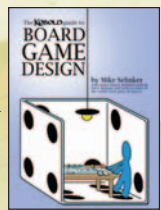
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# THE THREE RIMES

BY KEVIN ANDREW MURPHY

ART BY ASHTON SPERRY

**T**his is a tale of the far north and the heart of winter, a tale of frost fairs and fairy feasts, a tale of bards and boons. It is a tale of three rimes: the rime of hoarfrost that forms like fur in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings; the rimes of a bard, the magic meters and cunning kennings of a skilled skald; and the Rimeflow itself, the river that runs through the winter wastes and wends its way through one hundred wondrous tales.

## The First Rime

*When the Rimeflow freezes over,  
Water hard and clear as diamonds,  
By the banks of Kalsgard's towers,  
Then's the time for toasted almonds,  
Mulling mead and making merry—  
Crystalhue, the Feast of Shelyn,  
Fairer than the fairest fairy,  
Goodly goddess, friend of all men.*

Scip-Hadni was a bard of the north, a rimesinger of the Varni people, the reindeer-herding nomads who wander the northernmost wastes.

He had brought his reindeer sleigh and his chanting drum, his embroidered jacket and tasseled cap, a fine singing voice and the rune-poems of his people. He crossed the Rimeflow at Iceferry, fording the fjord where the famed ferry lay mired in ice, switched his snowshoes for skates of rune-scrimshawed walrus bone, and wended his way eastward.

Great was his wonder and delight upon reaching Kalsgard, capital of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, for the folk of the city had spilled out onto the ice, fashioning a marvelous mirror of the spires above, a festival city filled with fairy palaces, meadhalls made of marble-mocking hoarfrost, and even a lithesome linnorm sculpted from sparkling snow.

Blocks of ice had been set out as benches, warm furs laid over them so visitors could sit. Nutmongers wearing squirrelskin tippets sold sugared almonds and roasted chestnuts, and the air was honeyed with the steam from cauldrons of hot-mulled mead and the exotic scent of Shelyn's sweetcakes, spiced with saffron from the south.

Scip-Hadni savored it and sang poems praising these winter wonders.

Most wondrous of all was the aquarium. Fishing holes had been cut in the ice and fat carp were pulled up through them and tossed into the tank. Wicked pike, their jaws filled with countless needles, prowled behind the glass, eying one and all behind panes held fast by dwarf-forged iron bars and frost-rimed rivets. Even a sturgeon sat at the bottom, the ancient fish reserved for royals. This one would grace the high king's table.

Loveliest of all, however, was a single golden carp. She swam in the center, far from the iron-bound edges. Carpmongers netted her simpler brethren, tossing them into tubs which the townsfolk would take back to the city to fatten them up for Crystalhue's final feast. Scip-Hadni liked her best, with her shining scales like a maiden's golden hair and her wild eyes like a frightened reindeer doe.

That said, carp cannot pay for praise poems, nor do Ulfen warriors pay for their women to be compared to fish. Scip-Hadni sang other songs, likening the Ulfen maids to she-bears and falcons, she-wolves and dolphins, silver vixens and clever ermines resplendent in their white winter coats. Hacksilver bracelets rained down around his feet. Some went in his pack, others to pay for meals and mead.

Scip-Hadni sipped his drink, raising a toast to the golden carp, and tossed her the crumbs of a saffron bun, for she had brought him luck.

A carpmonger stepped forward. "You sing praise songs well, Varni man." His hood was trimmed with white leveret, the fur of the snowshoe hare, and he ducked his head lower, adding softly, "Can you also sing dirges?"

Scip-Hadni paused only long enough to be respectful, but a true bard does not miss a beat. "Who have you lost?"

The carpmonger glanced about like a frightened hare. "More than one."

Scip-Hadni nodded gravely. Ice fishing was a dangerous business. Indeed, many believed that the first to fall through must be left as payment to the spirits of that place, be they the vodyanoi and rusalka of witch-ruled Irrisen or the ice-hearted wendigo of the Realm of the Mammoth Lords. Scip-Hadni had heard tales of a troll lord who ruled the waters beneath the Black Tarn. Yet of the Rimeflow, he had heard no tales.

That, in itself, was significant. Folk spoke little of what they feared most.

"Tell me the names and deeds of those lost so I might compose runesongs to remember them."

The carpmonger did and Scip-Hadni began to wonder as the list grew and grew. One lost fisherman was unlucky but to be expected. Two, extremely unfortunate. Three, an exceptionally sorrowful year. But the situation began to look dire. When the number reached a dozen, it became a horror beyond human memory, and indeed, coincidence.

A bard, however, had his duty. That night Scip-Hadni was welcomed into the circle of the fishermen. Their camp was up the river from Kalsgard. They pointed a ways away to a hole in the ice where the best fishing lay and most of the fisherman had been lost. It never froze, they said.

Scip-Hadni knew that such spots formed where a spring led down



B''



to the river's edge. Yet he was also a bard, schooled in ancient lore. His grandmother had whispered warnings of such holes, polished to the smoothness of glass around the edges, gateways to the First World of the fey, whether formed of spring's mushrooms or winter's ice.

Scip-Hadni sang his dirge, drumming his drum, singing the lives of the men lost. He kept one eye on the remaining fishermen and the other on the fey-haunted hole. Steam rose from it and the night's chill froze it into the accursed pogonip frost, twinkling like dust from a pixie's wings but able to sear a man's lungs.

Leaning close to the fire lest he breathe even a gasp of it, Scip-Hadni sang his last song. When he had finished, there was silence.

Then, a moment later, there came a thunderous roar, not the roar of applause but the cracking of ice, great rifts forming as the night chilled.

This was followed by screams and wails echoing up from downriver where the festival city lay....

## The Second Rime

*Sing, O skald, and strike your tambor,  
Pluck your harp or play your pipes.  
Men forget, but you remember  
All men know or fear or hope.  
Warriors, their names unspoken,  
Live again when skalds' tongues skip  
Like the Rimeflow's leaping salmon,  
Souls returning from Death's keep.*

Life and death moved swiftly in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. The Rimeflow had cracked wide, swallowing a meadhall and all who drank within. With Ulfen graveside humor, it was joked that they had finally been able to quench their thirst! Varni humor was more subtle, and Scip-Hadni knew too many dark tales to ever speak ill of the dead.

There were other victims, but none more poignant than the nutmonger's daughter, a maiden in her first blush of womanhood. She stood frozen beneath the ice like a princess in a glass coffin, her blue eyes open wide in surprise, her lips slightly parted, her hands held over a chestnut brazier that no longer burned.

She would never be warm again.

Her name was Aelfhilda. Scip-Hadni composed a dirge, but would accept no payment. Her father was a widower and had lost his livelihood along with all that meant anything to him. It did not help that skaters came by to gawk, treating the frozen maiden as one more amusement now that the iron aquarium had lost its novelty.

The tank still stood, if now at a slight angle. Scip-Hadni tossed his favorite carp half of another saffron bun. Her eyes were like the nutmonger's daughter's trapped behind the ice, almost human and far more alive.

There were other dirges to sing, then a peculiar and inappropriately exotic amusement. Two nobles from Taldor claimed their minstrels had been swallowed by the ice. Rather than commission a dirge, they wished Scip-Hadni to sing their favorite song while they danced as they did on the waters of Oppara's frozen canals.

Their skates were made of silver and their movements were elegant but aloof, like the cruelly entrancing beauty of the fey. Yet like the fey, Scip-Hadni knew that Taldan nobles honored politeness above all.

He accepted their commission in exchange for a jeweled snuffbox. When opened, it played a pretty tune they called 'The Congress of Oppara.'

Scip-Hadni did not know the words, so sang a folderol, calling out the pure notes in the manner of songbirds. The Taldan couple danced upon the ice, weaving patterns with their skates, moving so exquisitely that they traced a perfect circle in the center of the Rimeflow's frozen expanse.

Scip-Hadni sang, watching as he did how his favorite golden carp swam in a circle in the center of the aquarium.

The Ulfen folk could not move with such elegance, but they joined in the merriment, dancing the spinning dervish dance of the witch queen's guards. Young Ulfen men in high fur hats, their arms crossed, leapt high, kicking out their iron skates with martial fury. The Taldan nobleman was not to be bested, and he spun about, leaping higher still, like a salmon leaping up the falls. Then he came down.

The ice cracked.

It was a perfect circle. One side went down, taking the Taldan couple and the Irrisen dancers with it. The other came up, falling into place like the lid of the jeweled

snuffbox, leaving the surface of the river smooth once again.

There were cries and exclamations, people taking up ice hooks and saws, attempting to save the d r o w n i n g .

Circles made gateways to the First World. The bodies floated to the bottom and were seen no more....

Until later.

At nightfall, the lost ones rose out of the ice fishing hole, the Taldan nobles and their minstrels, the Irrisen martial dancers, the folk from the meadhall, the dozen lost fishermen, and many more. They were as cold and merciless as death.

*"Nethys hid where  
All could see him,  
Like a snowflake in a blizzard,  
Like a rune upon a wizard."*

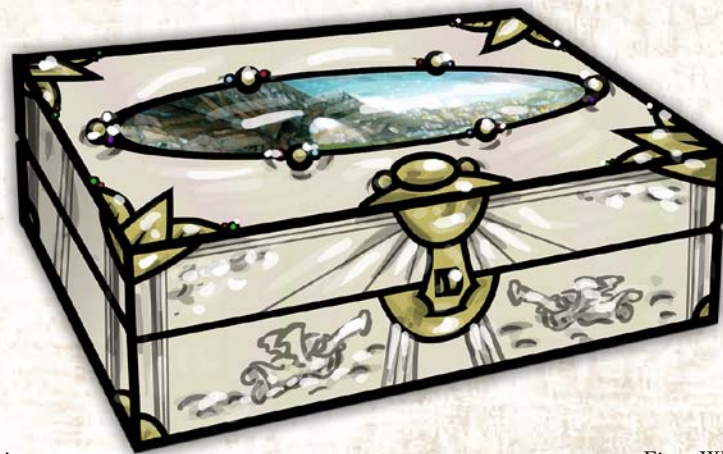
Scip-Hadni sang the charm of invisibility, a glamour of distraction such that the viewer would forever be looking at something else. The dead men blinked and staggered by, their soulless eyes seeking other victims.

Scip-Hadni held his breath and pressed his back up against the glass wall of the aquarium. The dead moved past, their lips as blue as their eyes, until Scip-Hadni saw a squirrelskin tippet so rimed with hoarfrost it looked like a queen's miniver stole. "Aelfhilda...." The name sprang from his lips unbidden.

"Who spoke?" The dead girl stopped in her tracks, as frozen in metaphor as she was in truth. "Who knows my name?"

One did not lie to the dead, but one did not tell them the truth either. "No one you know." Names held power. "But since I have answered two questions, Aelfhilda, I bind you by your name to answer two of mine: What do you seek and why?"

"Revenge and justice," the dead girl answered coldly. "Someone





has stolen Isegerde, the Nix King's daughter, and his anger knows no bounds. He will have her back. If she is dead, he will not rest until Kalsgard itself tumbles into the Rimeflow."

The riddle's knot came undone. The Nix King, ruler of the water fey, was said to live in a palace of coral, amber, and shells, a palace with a thousand beautiful rooms and one hidden one. There he kept his greatest treasure, the bottles holding the souls of the drowned. It was rumored to be far beneath the waters of many rivers and enchanted pools. Yet in truth, those were only entryways, for Scip-Hadni knew the true palace could only exist in the First World.

Nixies were cruel and capricious, like all fey, and beautiful, like many, but being fey, nixies were also bound by iron rules, one of which was iron itself. They were also able take the form of any creature that dwelled in the water—a puffin or an otter. Even a fish....

"I know where your princess is," Scip-Hadni said. "Come with me and I will see that she is returned to her father."

"I cannot see you so how can I?"

"Where I will take you is secret. Allow me to bind you and blindfold you and I will take you there."

Hope is a curious thing, even for the dead. Scip-Hadni bound the girl and took her to her father's tent where the old man hid from the battle that raged outside. The bard placed the rope in the old man's hands, whispering in his ear, "This is your daughter but not your daughter. Hold fast to the rope and tell her to wait, but do not let her free until I return with her soul."

The old man held the rope like it was hope itself, and Scip-Hadni slipped out of the tent, singing the charm of invisibility again and going up the steps to the iron aquarium.

At last he captured the golden carp. Scip-Hadni placed her in a tub of warm water, whispering, "Isegerde, I will take you to your father." He placed the tub in his sleigh and led his reindeer away from the battle, back up the Rimeflow's frozen flow.

### The Third Rime

*Flow, O Rimeflow, from Irrisen,  
Glacier Lake to Steaming Sea,  
East to west you stretch unbidden  
Like a linnorm roaming free.  
In your depths the Nix King, hidden,  
Claims the souls that pass his way.  
Warrior or crone or maiden,  
All fall to the nixie's sway.*

Scip-Hadni tied his sleigh to a frozen bush at the river's edge, but loosed his reindeer from all but one strap so she could break free if he did not return.

He then took the tub to the hole in the ice, pouring it in. The golden carp disappeared beneath the surface, then a moment later, reappeared. Her golden scales melted into golden curls and her large carp's eyes became maiden's eyes.

"Take me to your father, Isegerde," Scip-Hadni said.

The nixie laughed. "I will need a kiss first."

With that, she leapt up. The next moment, her lips were on his, sweet as honeycakes. Then her hands were on the flaps of his cap pulling him

down through the hole, into the water, and down and away below.

Scip-Hadni was not certain when he passed to the First World, only that when Isegerde released him, they were standing before a great gate. Two rows of pike stood guard. On second glance, the pike became a double complement of nixies wearing scaled armor and bearing pikes.

So it was through the palace. The salmon became courtiers. The trout became servants. The perch and greylings became clerks and turnkeys. Finally they came to the throne room where a great moss-bearded sturgeon became a hoary ancient king. "My lovely!" the Nix King exclaimed.

"Father!" She curtsied low in her gown of golden scales. "May I present my rescuer?"

"You may, my dear." The old king smiled, revealing mossy green teeth. "What is his name?"

"I do not know," admitted Isegerde, "but he knows mine."

"Indeed." The Nix King nodded. "What did he rescue you from?"

"Oh, it was horrid. A cage with iron bars. Surely you would not want me to dwell in it. But he shared his saffron cake, and then rescued me!"

"Saffron cakes. I see. Should we offer our guest some refreshment then?"

One did not eat the fruits of the First World if one intended to leave, but by the same token, one did not insult the fey. "I had quite stuffed myself at the faire, Majesty," Scip-Hadni apologized, bowing quickly. "Had I known, I might have saved room, but alas."

"I see," said the Nix King. "From your pleasant manner, I must guess that you are a bard. You must surely know I owe you a boon for rescuing my daughter from the horrors of the surface world. Ask what you like."

Scip-Hadni knew of bards before who had asked to learn the language of all animals, or how to take their forms, or any of a dozen wondrous secrets. He also knew that those who were greedy in what they asked of the fey gained what they wished but with a curse in the bargain. But he must ask, and whether it was too much or too little remained to be seen.

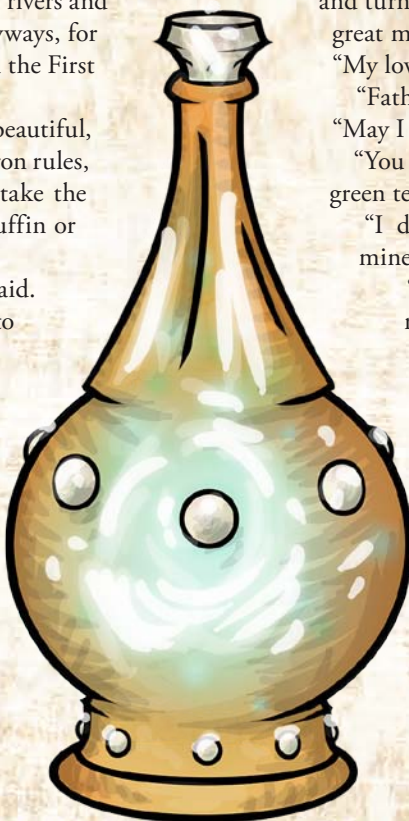
"Your Majesty, I have heard that you have a secret room where you keep bottles filled with the souls of the drowned. I ask not to see that chamber, or all of the souls, but only one, the soul of Aelfhilda, the nutmonger's daughter. I ask not for myself, but for him, for she is all he has left in the world. Surely you know what it is to lose a daughter and what you would do to see her safe return."

"A wise and selfless man," the king said. "Surely you must be a bard, for you know who we honor here. You shall have what you ask."

And so it was. The Varni bard returned with a bottle of pearls and amber, restoring the soul of Aelfhilda when he opened it before her. Great was the joy of her father, even greater when the bard presented them with the Nix King's bottle, a fabulous dowry for the poor man's daughter.

Yet how this story ends, I leave to the bards to say. Some say Scip-Hadni married Aelfhilda and they were happy and prosperous to the end of their days. Some say the Varni runesinger returned to Isegerde, the Nix King's daughter, and they live happily still in the First World.

Yet some say this happened not long ago, and if you wander to the Crown of the World, you may meet Scip-Hadni to ask where his story went from there. ☺





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# FROSTWIND DANCER: PRESTIGE ARCHETYPE FOR THE SHADOWDANCER

BY CLINTON J. "THATBOOMERKID" BOOMER

ART BY KATIE ELLIS

Here, into the mists and drifts of the deepest storm I'd ever seen befall the wood of the Grungir, she simply ... disappeared. An apparition, a ghost, a beautiful terror; she was half a snow-fairy, like a princess from some strange, mis-forgotten refrain of the Gorumskaagat in the mouth of a reeling drunk. She spun, and the blizzard spun with her, her servant and her lover. And then ... she was gone.

"But ... but not them, not the men she killed."

- Grandfather Hyglak, Huscarl of the North Jol track

Not all those who learn the strange, subtle weft & weave of shadow and skin, dance and damnation become tied to powers of necromancy: consorting with airy undead shades and calling up quasi-real mirages spawned of transparent, vague material stolen from lower dimensions. The frostwind dancer calls upon the brutal, howling heart of winter itself.

**Vanish within the Frost (Su):** A frostwind dancer can use the Stealth skill even while being observed. She can hide herself from view in the open without anything to actually hide behind as long as the area is below freezing - that is, 30 degrees Fahrenheit or lower. During conditions of snowfall, hail, sleet or high wind while the temperate is sufficiently low, she gains an additional bonus to her Stealth equal to her class level. This ability replaces Hide in Plain Sight.

**Winter's Evasion (Su):** At 2nd level, a frostwind dancer gains immunity to nonlethal damage from cold. She also gains evasion as a rogue except against any effect that deals fire damage. Against effects that deal fire damage, the frostwind dancer gains no benefit. This ability replaces Evasion. At 10th level, a frostwind dancer gains Improved Evasion as normal, with the same restriction (however, see Winter's Mistress).

**Lies in the Long Night (Sp):** When a frostwind dancer reaches 3rd level, she can create visual and auditory illusions. This ability may function either as *ghost sound* or as *silent image*, using the frostwind dancer's level as the caster level. A frostwind dancer can use this ability once per day for every frostwind dancer level she has attained. The DC for this ability is Charisma-based. This ability replaces both Shadow Illusion and

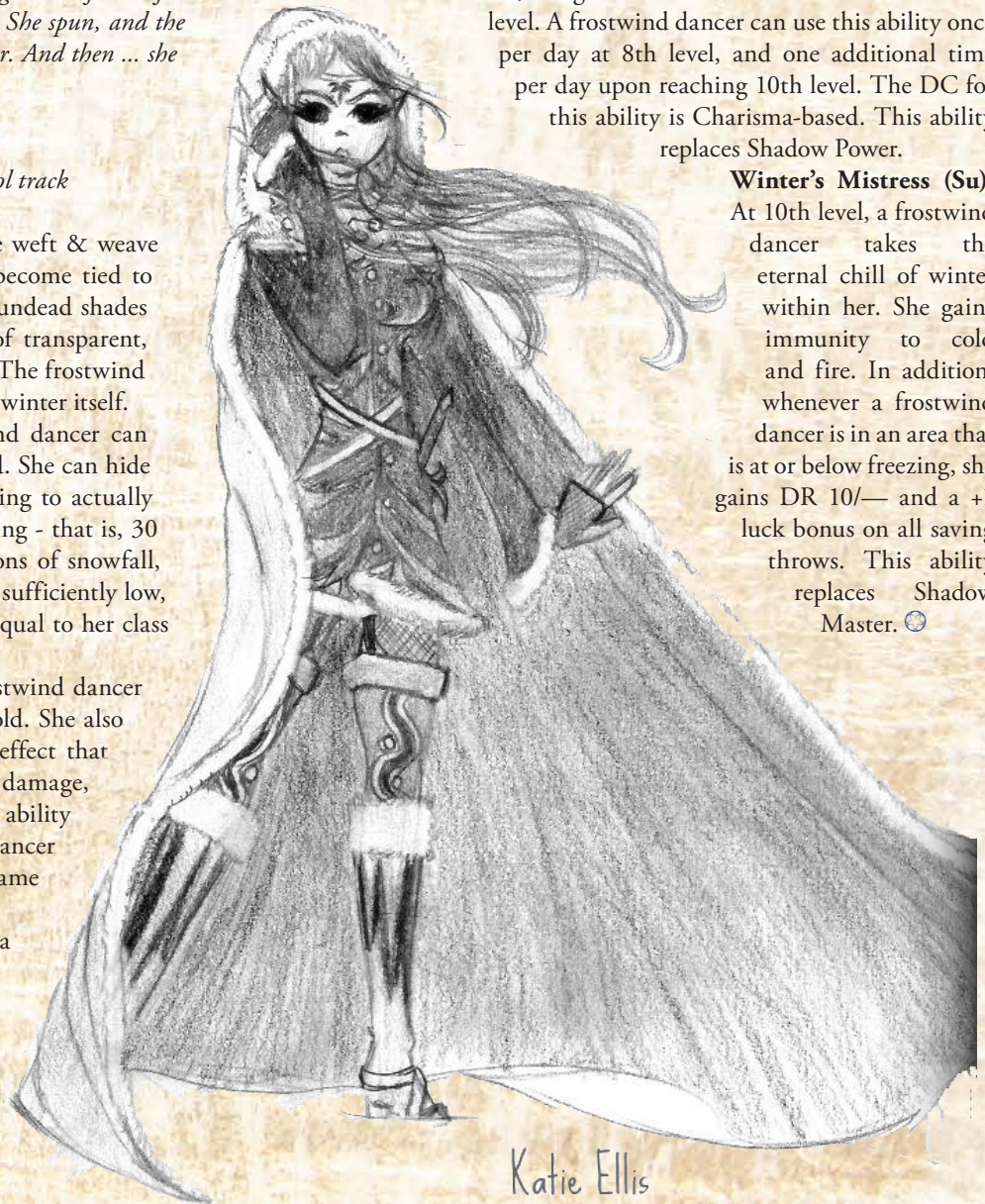
Summon Shadow.

**Call Down Winter (Sp):** At 4th level, a frostwind dancer can fill a living target with supernatural cold. This ability functions as the spell *unshakable chill*, using the frostwind dancer's level as the caster level; the effects stack. A frostwind dancer can use this ability once per day at 4th level, plus one additional time per day for every level attained beyond 4th. Upon reaching 10th level, this ability functions as a *quicken unshakeable chill*. The DC for this ability is Charisma-based. This ability replaces Shadow Call.

**Dance upon the Frost (Su):** At 4th level, a frostwind dancer gains the ability to travel between areas as if by means of a dimension door spell. The limitation is that the magical transport must begin and end in an area that is at or below freezing. A frostwind dancer can jump up to a total of 40 feet each day in this way; this may be a single jump of 40 feet or four jumps of 10 feet each. Every two levels higher than 4th, the distance a frostwind dancer can jump each day doubles (80 feet at 6th, 160 feet at 8th, and 320 feet at 10th). This amount can be split among many jumps, but each one, no matter how small, counts as a 10-foot increment. This ability replaces Shadow Jump.

**Hoar Frost (Sp):** At 8th level, a frostwind dancer can use raw cold to damage her foes. This ability functions as *cone of cold*, using the frostwind dancer's level as the caster level. A frostwind dancer can use this ability once per day at 8th level, and one additional time per day upon reaching 10th level. The DC for this ability is Charisma-based. This ability replaces Shadow Power.

**Winter's Mistress (Su):** At 10th level, a frostwind dancer takes the eternal chill of winter within her. She gains immunity to cold and fire. In addition, whenever a frostwind dancer is in an area that is at or below freezing, she gains DR 10/— and a +1 luck bonus on all saving throws. This ability replaces Shadow Master. ☉



Katie Ellis  
2011



# HERO'S HOARD: WITH MY SPEAR AND MAGIC HELMET!

BY DAVID "HILL GIANT" SCHWARTZ

ART BY CARLOS TORREBLANCA

## CAPTAIN'S SHIELD

**Aura** moderate transmutation; **CL** 6th

**Slot** shield; **Price** 7,357 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

### DESCRIPTION

A *Captain's Shield* is a large round shield painted with twining sea serpents. When used in combat, it acts as a +2 *heavy wooden shield*. When racked on the side of a water vehicle (in the style of the Ulfen longships) the captain's shield grants a +4 competence bonus on both driving checks and to the ship's AC.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must have 5 ranks in the Profession (sailor) skill; **Cost** 3,757 gp

## CURSE-STEALER

**Aura** strong evocation; **CL** 13th

**Slot** none; **Price** 11,302 gp; **Weight** 3 lb.

### DESCRIPTION

The wielder of this +1 *cold iron shortspear* gains a +2 resistance bonus on saves against curses. If the wielder successfully saves against a curse, he can choose to store it within the spear. Anytime the curse-stealer strikes a creature and the creature takes damage from it, the spear can immediately target that creature with the stored curse as a free action if the wielder desires. The target gains a saving throw against the curse at the original DC. Only one curse can be stored in a curse-stealer at one time. The spear magically imparts to the wielder the nature of the curse currently stored within it.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *spell turning*; **Cost** 5,802 gp

## GORUM'S FIST

**Aura** faint evocation; **CL** 5th

**Slot** none; **Price** 3,815 gp; **Weight** 4 lb.

### DESCRIPTION

The pommel of this +1 *longsword* resembles the knuckles of a fist. A proficient wielder can strike with the pommel as though wielding a +1 *light mace*. Three times per day, the wielder can strike an object with the pommel and make a Strength check with a +5 enhancement bonus to break that object.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength*; **Cost** 2,065 gp

## GRUNDINNAR'S BEARD

**Aura** moderate evocation; **CL** 6th

**Slot** none; **Price** 8,320 gp; **Weight** 7 lb.

### DESCRIPTION

This +1 *hooked axe* (*Ultimate Combat* pg144) is named for the dwarven god of peacekeeping whose face is etched in profile upon the blade. Whenever the wielder of *Grundinnar's Beard* successfully disarms an opponent, the disarmed weapon lands 15 feet away from its previous wielder, in a random direction.

If the wielder of *Grundinnar's Beard* has the Greater Disarm feat, he can instead make a ranged attack with the disarmed weapon as an immediate





action, as if the weapon had a range increment of 10 feet.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *magic stone*; **Cost** 4,320 gp

#### HONEY ARMOR

**Aura** faint abjuration; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** armor; **Price** 3,325 gp; **Weight** 8 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

The leather plates that compose this +1 *lamellar cuirass* (*Ultimate Combat* pg128) are hardened with beeswax and smell faintly of honey. Once per day, the wearer can cause the sweet scent to extend to a 30-ft. radius for as long as he concentrates. Animals and vermin within the radius are *fascinated* (Will DC 13 negates). Creatures with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher cannot be affected.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *animal trance*; **Cost** 1,745 gp

#### HUSCARL'S SEAXE

**Aura** faint abjuration; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** none; **Price** 4,702 gp; **Weight** 4 lb.

#### DESCRIPTION

This +1 *dagger* is paired with a leather sheath bearing a sigil in platinum of a powerful ruler. Once per day, as part of the action to draw the seaxe, the wielder can cast *shield other*

targeting the character whose sigil it bears. The wielder dismisses this effect by sheathing the seaxe.

Each *Huscarl's seaxe* is made for a specific ruler to be given to a trusted lieutenant. A character can rededicate the weapon to another liege by means of a special ritual. Treat this ritual as if the character were crafting the *Huscarl's seaxe*, except that it requires 1,000 gp worth of material components and 8 hours work.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield other*; **Cost** 2,502 gp

#### LINEBREAKER'S HELMET

**Aura** faint evocation; **CL** 1st

**Slot** head; **Price** 6,000 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

When the wearer of the linebreaker's helmet makes a successful bull rush against an opponent, he may attempt a free bull rush maneuver against all adjacent characters, as well. Before moving the first opponent, the wearer may compare the initial combat maneuver check result to CMD of all additional targets and move each target against whom the check is successful. The wearer can only move with the initial target.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *bull strength*; **Cost** 3,000 gp

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# OF CHANCE AND SKILL: GREAT HUNT

BY DAIN "ZYPHRYX" NIELSEN

ART BY JONATHAN ROBERTS

**G**reat Hunt is a board game for two to four players and is widely played within the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. The playing board is a thirteen by thirteen-square grid. Each player begins with five shield-bearers and one king. There is also a third piece, called the Great Wurm. Not controlled by any player, the Wurm acts randomly according to a die roll every turn.

While it is commonly a household game, enjoyed by nobility and commoner alike, Great Hunt playing boards are a common sight in mead halls. Save for the Great Wurm, kept on the board as a ward against the linnorms they represent, players in mead halls do need to provide their own pieces and the quality of one's Great Hunt pieces is considered a sign of social standing by many.

## STARTING LAYOUT

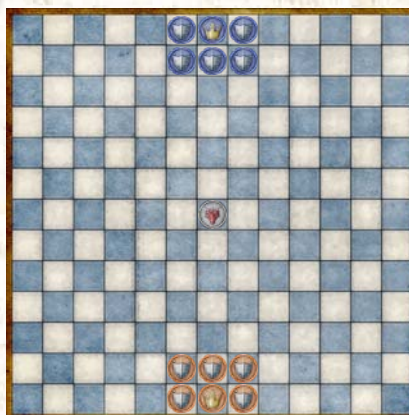
The beginning setup varies for a two, three, or four player game as shown in the illustrations below.

The starting player is determined by high die roll. Play continues clockwise from the initial player with each player moving one piece per turn.

### Three Player Setup



### Two Player Setup



## MOVEMENT

Shield-bearers move in a straight line, horizontally or vertically. The amount they may move is determined by how many active shield-bearers a player has. If a player has five shield-bearers still in play, the player's shield-bearers may move up to five squares, four shield-bearers four spaces, and so on. If a player only has one shield-bearer, they can move up to two spaces.

Kings may move horizontally, vertically or diagonally two spaces. Unlike a shield-bearer, a king must always move two squares.

The Great Wurm can move either horizontally or vertically, and the player rolls a d6 to determine the Wurm's movement.

If result of the roll would result in the Great Wurm moving off the board or through another piece, the direction reverses from the point of conflict.

The Wurm die passes to the next player counter-clockwise, who rolls and moves the Great Wurm at the end of their next turn. In the case of a two-player game, the Great Wurm die is rolled at the end of each player's turn.

### D6 Great Wurm moves...

1	One square towards the side opposite the player
2	One square to the player's right
3	One square towards the player
4	One square to the player's left
5	One square of the player's choice
6	Roll again, ignoring a result of 6. The Great Wurm moves two squares.

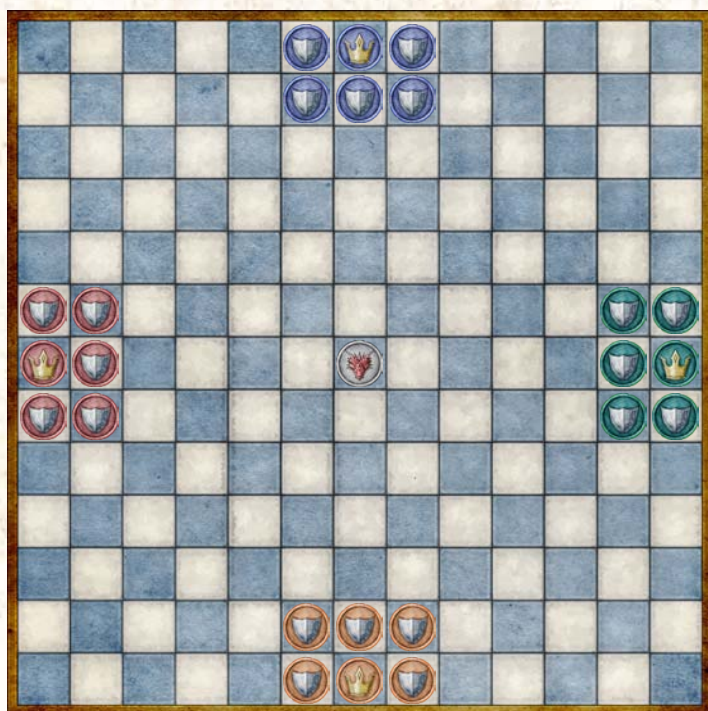
## CAPTURING PIECES

Players capture their opponents' pieces by trapping them between two of their own pieces. Two shield-bearers or a shield-bearer and a king may capture an opposing shield-bearer or king. A king may also slay the Great Wurm by ending its movement on the same square the Great Wurm occupies.

Moving a shield-bearer or king between two opposing pieces owned by the same player is considered a "flank"; the two opposing pieces do not capture the piece that moves between them.

The Great Wurm captures any shield-bearer or king that is in a square adjacent to it after it moves.

Players may move a shield-bearer or king adjacent to the Great Wurm on their turn without the piece being captured. However, if the piece is still adjacent to the Great Wurm after the Great Wurm moves, the piece is still captured.

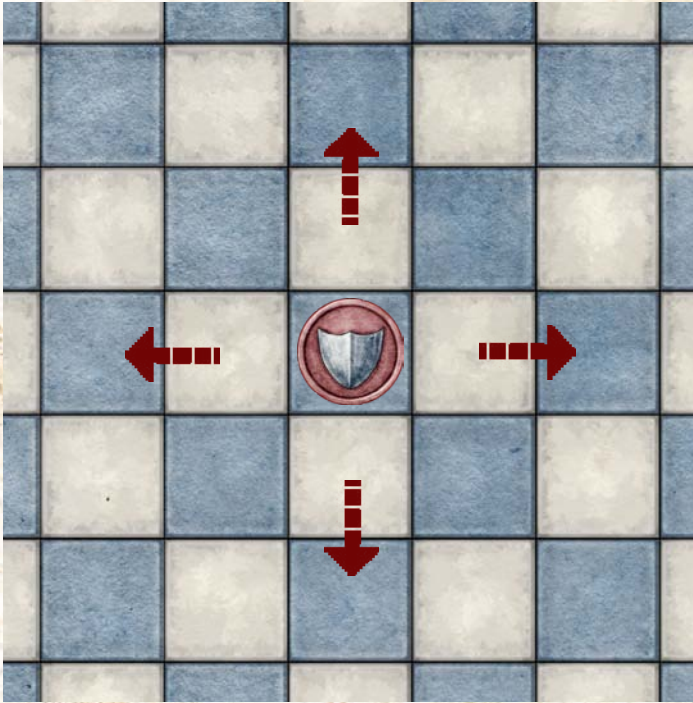




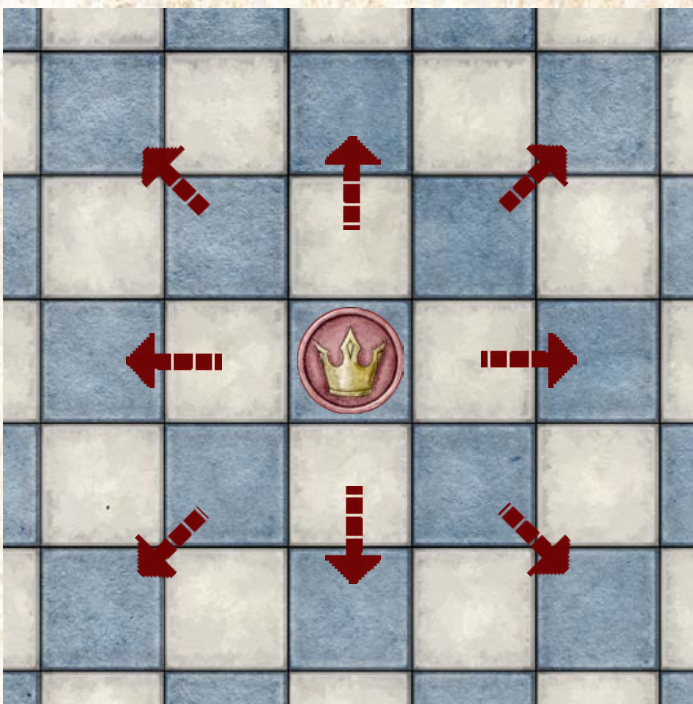
A player who is reduced to only their king cannot capture any piece except the Great Wurm and the player is termed as “questing” for the remainder of the game.

If a player’s king is captured, the player is out of the game and all of the player’s remaining pieces are removed from the board.

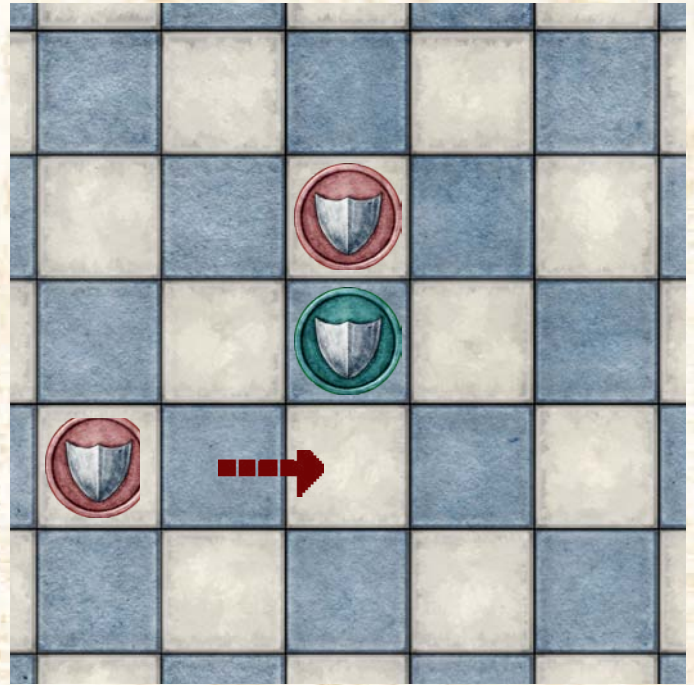
### Shield Movement



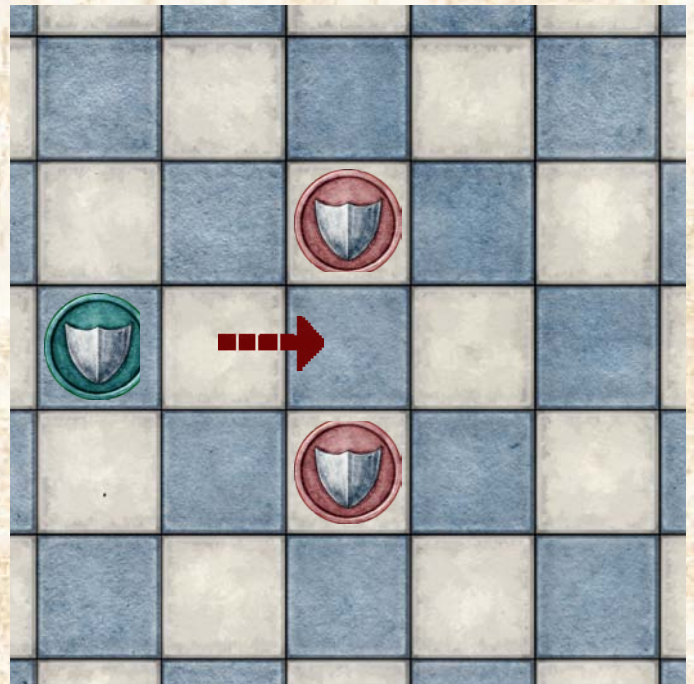
### King Movement



### Capturing Movement



### Flanking Movement



## WINNING THE GAME

There are two methods to winning the game, referred to as “the Warlord” and “the High King.”

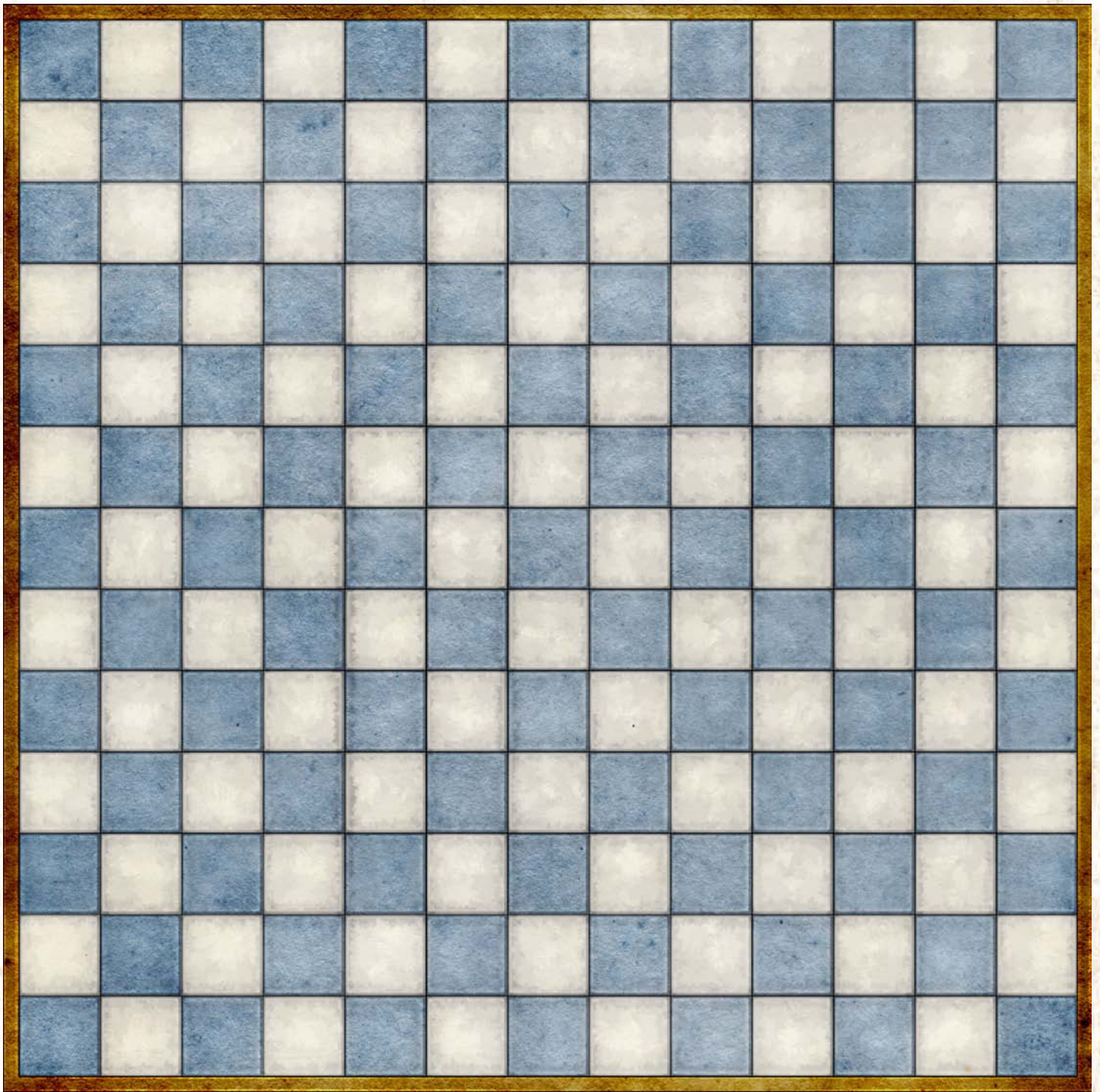
### The Warlord

In order to win by the Warlord path, the player must be the last to have a king on the board due to players capturing opposing kings or the Great Wurm capturing kings. This is considered the lesser of the two victories.

### The High King

In order to win by the High King path, the player must capture the Great Wurm, regardless of the number of other kings on the board. ☉









# TALLAK: PORTRAIT OF A WARRIOR

BY CHRISTOPHER DELVO

ART BY LIZ COURTS

I had heard only vague stories of Trollheim during my studies at the Academy. According to the texts, it is considered the last wall between the Lands of the Linnorm Kings and the Witch-ruled nation of Irrisen. I was sure that such a place would hold the warriors of legend I sought. I traveled north and west with a trading party from Andoran, passing through the Grungir Forest and crossed the Rimeflow River. By the time we reached Trollheim, I had spent most of my gold on furs and cloaks just to stay warm.

When the city came into view, I must say I was astounded. Never before had I seen such a structure. Even war-torn nations such as Brevoy lacked such cyclopean architecture.

The walls must have been over fifty feet tall; and as we passed within, I saw that they had to be near ten feet thick. I thanked the traders, paid them, and headed off in search of the castellan of the city, Freyr Darkwine. Surely his Blackravens would be just the warriors I was looking for. I never did find him.

I searched for over an hour as the thick snow and the harsh cold seeped through my furs and into my flesh. I grew tired, and wanted only to find a warm place to nap. I have trouble recollecting what happened next.

I remember checking my purse to see how much coin I still had and finding I couldn't count because my hands were shaking. I searched for an inn, but found none. Trollheim is not a city accustomed to visitors. The last thing I remember was leaning against a stone wall

and drifting into a heavy sleep.

I awoke later to the sound of a crackling fire and the scent of something savory. After getting my bearings, I sat up to examine my surroundings: I sat within a bed in a small, stone-and-mortar house—more of a hut, really—with little for decoration. A set of massive jaws adorned one wall like a set of antlers might hang in a hunter's lodge. A sheathed longsword sat next to a large, round wooden shield beside the room's single door. A lantern rested upon a small wooden table with a chair beside it. The fire I'd heard and the stew I'd smelled were to my right, and a big Ulfen man knelt before them.

He had a ladle in one hand, with which he stirred the stew before bringing it to his nose. Apparently deciding it was ready, he scooped some into the pair of bowls in his other hand. He replaced the ladle and removed the pot containing the stew from above the fire and set it aside, then turned toward me.

I was quite frightened of this huge Ulfen man. His face was old, with thick lines and creases that told of harsh summers and harsher winters. A thick scar ran across his cheek and down his chin, and one of his eyes was milky white. I could clearly see the scars on his face because his blonde beard would not grow over them. His beard, along with the hair atop his head, were soft and silken-looking and braided in a manner I had never seen before. I was quite taken aback by the stark contrast between such a grizzled face and such a fantastically well-kept mane.

The man placed the bowls of stew on his table and took a seat in his chair. He had no utensils, and instead drank the stew directly from the bowl. I took what I assumed to be my own serving in both hands. The warmth reminded my body that it was still half-frozen. Unpleasant pinpricks stabbed my fingers as I lifted the stew to my lips. It tasted awful, but it was warm and I drank it happily, chewing and swallowing the thick chunks of meat.

When he finished (long before I did), he simply sat and waited for me. It was quite awkward. I tried to make conversation, tried to thank him for pulling me in from the cold, and tried to ask about Darkwine, who I had still not found. He didn't respond to any of my questions, and only stared, so I finished my stew.

He took the bowls and exited the hut. The rush of cold air was bracing, but

I stood on stiff knees and followed to observe him as he washed them out with snow. Outside, I could see the massive walls of Trollheim jutting above the horizon in the distance. I knew I could make the journey to Trollheim, but it would be quite a long walk, and not one I wanted to take on my own.

The Ulfen waited for me to go back inside, and once I did, he





followed me in, shutting the door. Again, I tried to speak with him and thank him for his aid. Again, he did not respond. At this point, I was becoming quite frustrated. I was not sure whether he was just being rude, or if he perhaps did not speak the common tongue. So, I tried a new tactic.

"Hello," I told him in slow, deliberate words, "I am Karis." I gestured to my chest as I spoke, denoting that I was in fact giving my name.

"Tallak," he responded. I was so excited, I very nearly clapped my hands. Finally, I had made progress. Then, he took up his sword and shield, and left once more. The happiness drained from me, as I realized my apparent savior had left me behind. I decided to wait for him rather than attempt a trek to the city. Serving myself another bowl of the terrible stew and gulping it down only to warm my core, I pulled his chair up to the fire and waited. I am not sure how long I waited for him, but eventually I dug into my pack for a harrow deck I'd purchased in Varisia to entertain myself.

Eventually, Tallak came back. It was night by then. I welcomed him, but he again did not respond. Now I was fairly sure he was just being rude. He spied the bowl I'd used for my second serving of stew and took it up before replacing his sword and shield against the wall, cleaning it once more with snow before returning and removing his weapons and heavy leathers. I watched as he sat by the fire, reached under his bed and removed a large, thick-bristled brush.

He undid the braids in his beard and hair before brushing both of them. I started counting the strokes of the brush through his hair, but stopped sometime after reaching one hundred fifty. I would not be surprised if he brushed both his hair and beard a thousand times each. At last, he replaced the brush beneath the bed, he re-braided them—a fascinating sight on its own—and put his leathers back on before stretching out on the floor by the fire. A few minutes later, I

heard the snoring of deep sleep.

I sat for a short while, embarrassed that this man who had taken me into his home when I could have died in the frost, and who had fed me and kept me warm, was now sleeping in front of the fire so that I might have his bed. I do not remember when I fell asleep.

I had heard that the sound of an Ulfen song is one of the most beautiful sounds in all of Golarion. When I awoke to the sound of Tallak singing outside, I knew that statement to be true.

A bowl of stew lay on the table beside the bed, but I ignored it and arose, stepping outside to watch him. He sat naked in the snow, bathing himself with the same pot he'd used for the stew, now filled with steaming water. Scars decorated his body like roads on a leather map. The song emanating from his lips was slow and sad, and in a language I did not recognize, but it was truly the most beautiful I'd ever heard.

Not wishing to intrude, I closed the door and waited until he came inside and dressed in his leathers once more. He aimed his one good eye at me and said,

"Today we go to Trollheim."

I agreed and blanketed myself once more in my furs. The journey back to Trollheim was long and arduous, but having Tallak watch over me as we walked somehow made it easier to withstand. He did not say goodbye when we finally entered the city walls, but wordlessly directed me to the closest inn. I thanked him and watched him walk away, heavy and strong, with silken, braided hair the color of the sun and a blade-and-shield slung across his back.

Stark against the snow, he was the portrait of a warrior.

*-Karis Nils, Pathfinder Chronicler ☺*

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BY LIZ "HEROSBACKPACK" SMITH

ART BY RUSS AKREO

**S**ituated where the Rimeflow River bends northwest, roughly halfway between Losthome and Delmon's Glen, Trenail is one of the lesser-known reasons for the success of the Kalsgard shipyards. Much of the more specialized wood that the shipyards use has been grown, harvested, and prepared in Trenail, before being rafted down the river to join the larger booms of Losthome. Since the Guardians of Grungir arrived there two centuries ago, Trenail has grown entwined with the forest it depends on, and only the brashest of would-be woodcutters enter its territory uninvited.

#### TRENAIL

N small town

**Corruption** -2; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +0; **Law** +0; **Lore** +5;  
**Society** -3

**Qualities** magically attuned, rumormongering citizens

**Danger** +0

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

**Government** magical

**Population** 700 (550 humans; 100 gnomes; 35 fey; 12 dwarves;  
3 halfelves)

#### Notable NPCs

*Guardian Bruni Gelier* (LN male human druid 7)

*Chief Trader Kadlin Steinvor* (CG female human bard 6)

*Raftcaptain Skeggie Risteljaf* (N male gnome rogue 7)

#### MARKETPLACE

**Base Value** 1,200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 6,000 gp; **Spellcasting**  
7th

**Minor Items** 3d4; **Medium Items** 1d6; **Major Items** —

#### APPEARANCE

Most visitors arrive by river. On the downstream side, towards Losthome, the first sign of Trenail is a muddy west bank sloping up to meet piled logs and a rutted dirt path. On the upstream side, Trenail appears more gradually as a collection of low buildings rising among the trees on either side, and then a pair of docks, each supporting a dozen rowboats. Away from the river, the buildings continue, forming a town not so much carved out of the forest as built in harmony within it. Fifty yards in from the east bank, the forest opens out into a clearing around a shrine to Gozreh built from river stones and tree branches. On the west bank, a similar clearing forms Trenail's main market place.

#### HISTORY

Trenail has existed as a lumber camp almost as long as Kalsgard has been making ships, but when Losthome was founded, it began

sending its wood there, trading lower profits for substantially reduced costs. Then, in 4508, the Guardians of Grungir arrived at Trenail in force. To the surprise of many, Trenail wasn't closed completely, but reshaped into a town that treated the trees with respect, asking permission before felling them and using magic to encourage planted replacements to grow fast, strong and the perfect shape for the ships desired. Trenail doesn't produce the volume of wood that it did prior to the Guardians' takeover, but the wood it does produce is of even higher quality, and as a result the town has continued to thrive under their care.

#### RELATIONS AND TRADE

Trenail has good, if slightly strained, relations with Losthome as the town knows that without their wood, Losthome would have to fell more of its own trees to meet demand. However, Losthome also takes the credit for Trenail's wood when delivering to Kalsgard, something that has become a sore point with Trenail's traders. Relations with Jol and Trollheim are more confrontational, as the Guardians have previously caught lumberjack teams from both cities slipping into the forest to cut their own wood.

#### SITES OF INTEREST

**(Everything But) Blood and Ashes:** From a distance this round chandler's shop appears to bear the name 'Blood and Ashes'. However on close observation, smaller words can be seen surrounding the main sign so that in full it reads 'Everything but Blood and Ashes'. Inside it is a maze of cluttered shelves and chests filled with miscellaneous goods. This is also where the majority of the town's magical items can be found. The owner, **Inga Ormsdottir** (NG female half-elf wizard 3) opened the store to pay her way while she studied magic and never got round to closing it again. For a fee, she will also use minor magics such as *mending* on broken axes and other non-magical items, or placing an *arcane mark* on expensive lumber destined for a particular customer, as well as creating alchemical items to order.

**The Floating Forest:** Wedged between three old pines not far from the shrine, this inn is smothered in ivy and by far the most natural looking of the main buildings. Patronised mostly by the Guardians and their customers, fare here leans towards the gourmet rather than the common. Lanterns containing stained glass panels hang above the tables, and each table is divided from the others by thin green curtains woven to look like cascading leaves. Everyday business is handled by **Halla Gudlang** (NE female human druid 1), an apprentice Guardian, but both the chief trader Kadlin Steinvor and the lumber overseer Guardian Bruni Gelier can be found at the Floating Forest's tables most nights, sometimes together, sometimes separate, according to their off and on relationship and the trading deals they are working on at the time. Halla has been skimming off some of the profits from the inn since she was put in charge of it, but is not foolish enough to do anything that would endanger her apprenticeship.

**The Greatsword:** When **Regin Vermund** (CN male human barbarian 3) lost an eye in a wild charge, he decided to retire and open his very own tavern where he could drink without being thrown out by some bouncer or other. When Regin finally settled in Trenail, he brought his faithful greatsword with him to hang above the bar and has been known to sweep the sword off its hooks to punctuate a tale or quell any brawls that break out among the lumberjacks that commonly patronize it. The tavern itself has been dug halfway into the ground so that although it appears low ceilinged from outside, on the inside it rises a full ten feet to a barrel-shaped turf roof. A central



firepit both warms and lights the room, although candles and torches are available if anyone asks for a better light. Despite the rough, plain appearance of the tavern the fare is good quality and personally tested by Regin to make sure it stays that way.

**The Runty Rats:** Set beside the west bank dock, this inn spirals up a tree in a series of platforms and ladders, and is the favored haunt of the gnome river teams who guide the log rafts down the river to Losthome. With every platform and ladder a different color, the inn is also one of the few bright buildings in town and a source of conflict between the Guardians (who want it to blend in) and the owner Skeggie Risteljaf. Although Skeggie usually leaves the day to day running of it to his son **Audisil Risteljaf** (NG male gnome rogue 2), Skeggie is not above using his position as raftcaptain to get his own way, threatening to have all the river teams go on strike unless they can have their inn

the way they want it. After all, Skeggie claims every time, nature uses bright colors like that every time a flower opens. Why shouldn't people do the same?

**Winding Weft:** Built around a tree, with long passages sprawling out from it like the legs of a giant spider, and using the tree's branches as living storage and ropewalk anchors, this angular shop specialises in all types of weaving and spinning, from the rough cord made from bast fibres and used to tie the log rafts together, to fine embroidery thread and silk rope. Run by the lovers **Meldof Jorund** (CG male human expert 8), a specialist in rope and **Ludin Hakkon** (NG male human cleric (Shelyn) 5), who concentrates more on cloth and tapestries, the Winding Weft also has a shrine to Shelyn tucked nearly out of sight behind coils of rope and bales of cloth. Drapes on the shrine's walls alternate between the best of Ludin's tapestries and fine cloth similar to the dividers in the Floating Forest but woven in fall colors rather than shades of green. Above the shrine, where a breeze can catch it and set it playing, hangs a set of windchimes.



to the dividers in the Floating Forest but woven in fall colors rather than shades of green. Above the shrine, where a breeze can catch it and set it playing, hangs a set of windchimes.

## ENCOUNTERS

**Poison!** Several traders have apparently fainted after dining at the Floating Forest. Attempted healing of the third trader discovered that he had been poisoned with oil of taggit. Halla suspects that one of her rival apprentices is framing her in an attempt to get her position running the inn and although she is skilled enough to use *purify food and drink* on the meals without problems, the wines served with it are more difficult. She tasks the PCs with finding and removing the culprit in any way necessary.

**Strikebreakers** The season's last load of logs urgently needs to reach Lathome in time to join the booms there, but Skeggie has carried out his threats and Trenail's river teams are on strike. The PCs must enter Trenail quietly, collect the logs and raft them down the river by themselves.

**Treant** A treant is stalking the Guardians as traitors, after encountering lumberjacks on the edge of Trenail's territory. The PCs must mediate between treant and druids if Trenail is to survive. 🌀



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# HERO'S HOARD: WEAPONS OF LEGEND

BY TOM "TOM QADIM" PHILLIPS

ART BY CARLOS TORREBLANCA

**E**rlho Dyndarion, halving bard, raconteur, and noted expert on the history and identification of magical arms, published his book *Weapons of Legend* in 4701 AR. Erlho's book includes the descriptions of many unique enchanted weapons, which the bard compiled during his travels throughout Avistan and Garund in the latter half of the 4600s. What follows are two excerpts from *Weapons of Legend* describing a pair of weapons from the Lands of the Linnorm Kings: a troll-slaying bastard sword and a sentient battle axe.

## HRAKALGRIM

**Names:** Hrakalgrim, Trollbane, Onund's Vengeance

**Description:** *Hrakalgrim* is a +3 mighty cleaving troll bane bastard sword. The broad, two-edged blade is 50 inches long and made of dull, oily-grey steel. The sword's pommel is another 21 inches long, carved from a single piece of mammoth ivory. Set in the pommel's tip is a large emerald of exquisite cut and clarity, easily worth a jarl's ransom. The blade itself sheds no light, but the emerald glows with a pale green radiance when the sword is drawn. This radiance becomes as bright as a lantern if trolls approach within 1,000 feet. Aside from a forge-mark that identifies the sword's maker as the legendary Ulfen smith Onund the Blind, *Hrakalgrim* bears no other runes or markings.

*Hrakalgrim* automatically suppresses the regeneration ability of all trolls within 30 feet of its wielder. Additionally, whenever *Hrakalgrim* slays a troll, the wielder immediately heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to the wielder's full normal hit points). The sword has neither alignment nor sentience.

**History:** *Hrakalgrim* is an ancient weapon, and has been mentioned in Ulfen tales going back two millennia. First mentioned in Vingraf's *Tales of Snow and Crimson*, the sword was the creation of Onund the Blind who forged *Hrakalgrim* and two dozen lesser troll-slaying blades on the Isle of Aegos to counter a massive troll incursion that plagued the island

in the early 2700s. The sword was first wielded by Onund's daughter Breyna, who used it to slay the troll-king who had eaten her mother and three brothers, Grogelmok. Before Breyna died of old age, she gave the sword to her son Idain, who perished when the Choking Death swept through western Avistan in the summer of 2742 AR. Idain was the last of his line. It is rumored that one of his servants carried the sword away from Aegos in secret.

*Hrakalgrim* surfaced again in 3312 AR in Kalsgard, in the hands of a hulking Kellid mercenary who called himself Thral. The blade was recognized by the sage Ujan the Grey who tried unsuccessfully to purchase the sword from the mercenary. By year's end, Thral left Kalsgard to join his companions fighting the Winter War in Irrisen, where it is presumed he met his fate on one battlefield or another.

Though Thral never returned to Kalsgard, *Hrakalgrim* eventually did. In 4109 AR, a sword matching *Hrakalgrim*'s description was seen in the possession of the magus Tarna Narsdottir, who used the blade to slay a Varisian sorcerer during an argument at one of the city's riverfront inns. A year later, Tarna was murdered by bugbears in the Grungir Forest. It is unclear if she had the sword with her at the time.

In 4391 AR, the warrior-skald Aengar of Bildt appeared briefly in Trollheim with *Hrakalgrim*, as noted by the wizard Kragulf of the Iron Eye whom Aengar paid to identify the sword's powers. Kragulf's journal mentioned that Aengar paid him with platinum coins minted in the semi-mythical city of Nithveil, and that the warrior-skald claimed to have stolen *Hrakalgrim* from one of the city's fey inhabitants. How the sword—and Aengar for that matter—found its way to Nithveil and back again is unknown, for Aengar would say nothing more about his experiences. Shortly after Aengar left Trollheim he was never seen again.

Erlho Dyndarion saw the blade himself while visiting Jol in the spring of 4689 AR. It was in the possession of a young jarl from Antler Rock, who had come to Jol for trade. This jarl, Njorak by name, was unaware of the sword's power or history until Erlho revealed it to him. Six years later, someone stole *Hrakalgrim* while Njorak lay bedridden recovering from a battle-wound. When Njorak came to his senses, the sword and the thief were nowhere to be found. Since then, *Hrakalgrim*'s whereabouts remain unknown.

## INGOLSDOTTIR

**Names:** Ingolsdottir

**Description:** *Ingolsdottir* is a sentient, chaotic neutral +2 mithral keen thundering battle axe that magically resizes to fit the hands of its wielder. The wickedly curved axe-blade shimmers dramatically in bright light, but the axe itself sheds no magical radiance. Etched onto the back of the axe-blade's spine is the name "*Ingolsdottir*" in Skaldic runes. The haft is made of fire-blackened oak and has a handgrip wrapped in white dragon hide and fine mithral wire.

*Ingolsdottir* is intelligent, but not particularly clever (Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 14, Ego 14), and claims to only speak Skald (though she does



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seem to understand the Common tongue). She has the personality and voice of an Ulfen warrior-woman who is always eager for a fight. She is loud, brash, and boastful, and enjoys singing bawdy songs and trading off-color insults with her wielder or anyone else within earshot. *Ingolsdottir* is also a pathological liar. She lies constantly, especially about her origin and history.

While grasping *Ingolsdottir's* handgrip, her wielder can cast *endure elements* and *obscuring mist* each three times per day, and *alter winds* and *haunting mists* each once per day as a 12th level caster.

Additionally, six times per day, *Ingolsdottir's* wielder can touch a flagon's worth of any liquid and transform it into mead. *Ingolsdottir* has darkvision to a distance of 60 feet, though she cannot bestow this ability on her wielder.

axe or his king's corpse.

After presumably being passed from one frost giant chieftain to another, *Ingolsdottir* eventually fell into the hands of the notorious frost giant jarl Thrivnir the Insatiable, whose motley army of giants, trolls, and ogres plagued the lands north of Kalsgard throughout the mid-4300s. Thrivnir's reign of terror finally ended in 4360 AR when an unnamed party of adventurers killed him and claimed the axe. *Ingolsdottir* was traded to the wizard Eranir of Kalsgard in exchange for magical training for the party's spellcasters. Eranir in turn soon sold the axe to the half-elven ranger Munán Ravenswinter.

Munán took *Ingolsdottir* with him when he sailed to Arcadia in 4365 AR, where he spent four decades exploring that continent's northern wilderness. He returned to Kalsgard an old man, and gave the axe to his grandson Bjorgren, before setting sail a final time for Valenhall. Bjorgren sadly met his end barely a year after that in 4406 AR, when he and his companions fell prey to a remorhaz somewhere in the northwestern Icemark.

*Ingolsdottir* appeared again briefly in Halgrim on the Isle of Battlewall in 4621 AR, this time in the possession of a young warrior named Yndreg who used *Ingolsdottir* to kill a pair of hill giants that had attacked several local farmsteads. When Yndreg presented the giants' heads to the elders of Halgrim to collect the promised bounty, the wizard Alganar observed that Yndreg was completely under *Ingolsdottir's* mental control. After collecting his reward, Yndreg left Halgrim for the mainland and was not seen again. This was the last recorded sighting of *Ingolsdottir* remain unknown, but Erlho Dyndarion keenly notes that her constant lies and deceptions could help hide her whereabouts. ☹

#### History:

*Ingolsdottir's* origins are an enigma. It is not known who forged her and Ulfen legends shed no light on who "Ingol" was or why he crafted such a bizarre weapon. To add to the mystery, *Ingolsdottir* always lies when asked

about her maker or she evades the subject entirely. Though most sages believe her to be quite ancient, *Ingolsdottir* only first appeared on record in 4311 AR, when the ranger Sempet Sixfingers brought her to Kalsgard to satisfy a weregild he owed to King Grot the Noseless (an ogre having bitten off his nose) for the accidental slaying of one of the king's servants. Sempet claimed to have looted the weapon from a rime-covered ruin on the Isle of Kalva, but his claim was never verified.

Grot took an immediate liking to *Ingolsdottir*, who he half-jokingly referred to as his "favorite wife", and wielded her throughout his brief reign. He famously used *Ingolsdottir* to slay the ice linnorm Cracklefang, who roused his anger by devouring the residents of three steadings under his protection in the harsh winter of 4316. When Grot perished from Cracklefang's death curse, *Ingolsdottir* was claimed by one of his sword-brothers, who promptly lost the blade when frost giants ambushed the party returning the king's body to Kalsgard. Only the warrior Ingvak Gnarlhand returned to Kalsgard alive and he did so without the



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# THE DRAGON- BLOODED

BY KEITH "SIR HEXEN INEPTUS" DOUGHTY

ART BY ISAAC ROYO

Not all descendants of dragons want, or even have the capability, to develop innate casting abilities. Like dragon disciples, the so-called dragon-blooded seek to emulate their noble ancestry, not in magical insight, but in physical prowess. Some dragon-blooded retain spellcasters—almost exclusively dragons—to perform rituals of transformation. Others meditate upon ancient relics of draconic origin. Either way requires research and knowledge about dragons, and always grueling trials.

**Role:** This prestige class is for those who want to play a character with the might of the dragons in melee combat. Dragon-blooded develop their draconic abilities with the ultimate goal of becoming part dragon.

**Alignment:** Dragon-blooded can be of any alignment. Most follow the ethics and morals of the type of dragon they seek to emulate.

**Hit Die:** d12

## Requirements

To qualify to become dragon-blooded, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

**Race:** Any non-dragon.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +4.

**Feats:** Draconic Ancestry or Eldritch Heritage (draconic bloodline) feat. No feat is required if the character

is a sorcerer with the draconic bloodline.

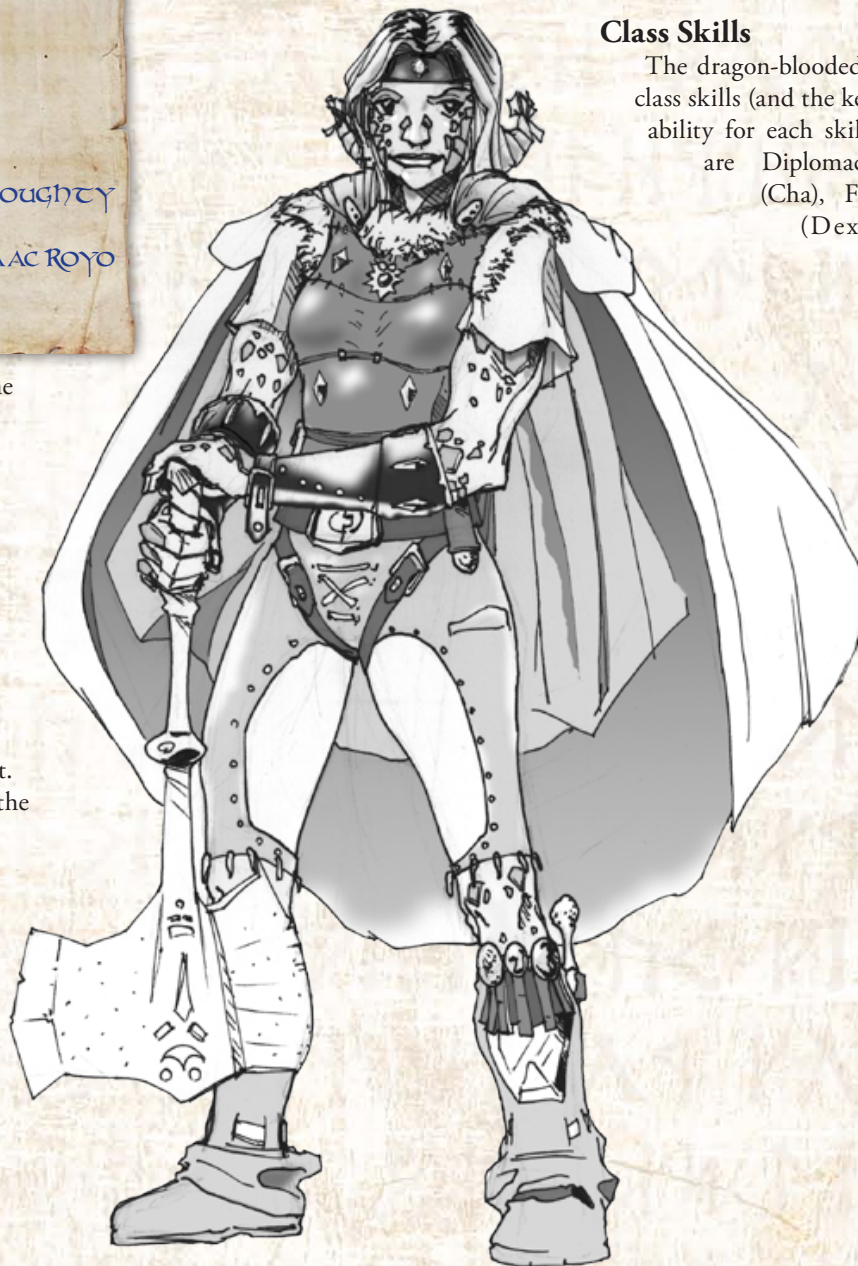
**Skills:** Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks.

**Language:** Draconic.

**Special:** A character cannot take levels in dragon-blooded if he has levels in dragon disciple. A dragon-blooded cannot take levels in dragon disciple.

## Class Skills

The dragon-blooded's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Diplomacy (Cha), Fly (Dex),



**Table: Dragon-blooded**

Level	Base Bonus Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Draconic skin (+1, resist 5), dragon weaponry, blood's spell (1/day)
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Ability boost (Str +2)
3	+2	+2	+1	+2	Bloodline feat, breath weapon (2/day)
4	+3	+2	+1	+2	Ability boost (Str +2), draconic skin (+1, resist 10)
5	+3	+3	+2	+3	Blindsight 30 ft., dragon weaponry (magic), blood's spell (2/day)
6	+4	+3	+2	+3	Ability boost (Con +2), breath weapon (+1d8, unlimited)
7	+5	+4	+2	+4	Bloodline feat, draconic skin (+1, resist 20)
8	+5	+4	+3	+4	Ability boost (Con +2, Int +2), wings
9	+6	+5	+3	+5	Breath weapon (+1d8), dragon weaponry (energy), blood's spell (3/day)
10	+7	+5	+3	+5	Blindsight 60 ft., dragon apotheosis



Knowledge (all; each skill taken individually) (Int), Perception (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

**Skill Ranks at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the dragon-blooded prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Dragon-blooded gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

**Heritage of Dragons:** At 1st level, you must select one of the chromatic or metallic dragon types. This choice cannot be changed. A number of your abilities grant resistances, spell-like abilities, and deal damage based on your dragon type, as noted on the following table.

**Table: Heritage of Dragons – dragon types**

Dragon Type	Energy Type	Breath Shape	Spell-Like Ability
Black	Acid	60-foot line	Speak With Animals
Blue	Electricity	60-foot line	Ghost Sound
Green	Acid	30-foot cone	Entangle
Red	Fire	30-foot cone	Detect Magic
White	Cold	30-foot cone	Fog Cloud
Brass	Fire	60-foot line	Speak With Animals
Bronze	Electricity	60-foot line	Create Food and Water
Copper	Acid	60-foot line	Grease
Gold	Fire	30-foot cone	Bless
Silver	Cold	30-foot cone	Feather Fall

**Draconic Skin (Ex):** At 1st level, a dragon-blooded gains resistance

5 against his energy type (see Table: Heritage of Dragons – dragon types) and a +1 natural armor bonus. At 4th level, his energy resistance increases to 10 and natural armor bonus increases to +2. At 7th level, his energy resistance increases to 20 and natural armor bonus increases to +3.

**Dragon Weaponry (Su):** At 1st level, a dragon-blooded can grow claws and fangs as a free action. These are treated as natural weapons,

**FEAT**

**Draconic Ancestry**

You have draconic blood in you that shows in a lot of little ways.

**Prerequisite:** Cha 11, taken only at 1st level

**Benefit:** Appraise is a class skill for you. You gain a +1 bonus on saving throws versus fear effects. For every 2 Hit Die you possess, you gain an additional +1 hit point.

allowing him to make two claw attacks and one bite attack as a full attack action using his full base attack bonus. Each claw deals 1d4 1d4 points of damage plus his Strength modifier (1d3 if the dragon-blooded is Small). His bite deals 1d6 points of damage (1d4 if the dragon-blooded is Small), plus 1–1/2 times his Strength modifier. A dragon-blooded can use these natural attacks for a number of rounds per day equal to the dragon-blooded's level + his Charisma modifier. These rounds do not need to be consecutive.

At 5th level, these natural attacks are considered magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming DR. In addition, the damage increases by one step.

At 9th level, these natural weapons become permanent, and also deal an additional 1d6 points of damage of the dragon-blooded's energy type on a successful hit.

A dragon-blooded may take the Greater Weapon Focus, Greater Weapon Specialization, and Weapon Specialization feats for claw and bite attacks as if his dragon-blooded levels were fighter levels; dragon-blooded levels stack with fighter levels for qualifying for these feats.

**Blood's Spell (Sp):** A dragon-blooded develops limited magical abilities. He gains the use of a spell-like ability determined by his dragon type (see Table: Heritage of Dragons – dragon types). A dragon-blooded can use this ability 1/day at 1st level. He gains an additional use per day at 5th and 9th levels. A dragon-blooded's caster level is equal to his class level.

**Ability Boost (Ex):** As a dragon-blooded gains levels in this prestige class, his ability scores increase as noted on Table: Dragon-blooded. These increases stack and are gained as if through level advancement.

**Bloodline Feat:** At 3rd level, and again at 7th level, a dragon-blooded receives one bonus feat, chosen from a list available to draconic bloodline sorcerers. The dragon-blooded must meet the prerequisites for these bonus feats.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** At 3rd level, a dragon-blooded gains a breath weapon. This breath weapon deals 1d8 points of damage + the dragon-blooded's level + his Charisma modifier. Those caught in the area of the breath receive a Reflex save for half damage. The DC of this save is equal to 10 + the dragon-blooded's level + his Charisma modifier. The shape of the breath weapon and type of damage depend on the dragon type (see Table: Heritage of Dragons – dragon types). At 3rd level, a dragon-blooded can use this ability twice per day, but no more than once every 2d4 rounds. At 6th level, the breath weapon damage dice increases by +1d8, and the dragon-blooded can use this ability at will (but still no more than once every 2d4 rounds). At 9th level, the damage increases by another +1d8.

**Blindsight (Ex):** At 5th level, the dragon-blooded gains blindsense with a range of 30 feet. Using nonvisual senses the dragon-blooded notices things he cannot see. He usually does not need to make Perception checks to notice and pinpoint the location of creatures within range of his blindsense ability, provided that he has line of effect to that creature.

Any opponent the dragon-blooded cannot see still has total concealment against him, and the dragon-blooded still has the normal miss chance when attacking foes that have concealment. Visibility still affects the movement of a creature with blindsense. A creature with blindsense is still denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class against attacks from creatures it cannot see. At 10th level, the range of this ability increases to 60 feet.

**Wings (Ex):** At 7th level a dragon-blooded grows a set of draconic wings. Unless the dragon-blooded has a better fly speed, he can fly at twice his base land speed (average maneuverability).

**Dragon Apotheosis:** At 10th level, a dragon-blooded becomes part dragon. He is forevermore treated as a dragon rather than as a humanoid (or whatever his creature type was) for the purpose of spells and magical effects. His breath weapon can now be used once every 1d4 rounds. He gains a +4 bonus to Strength and a +2 bonus to Charisma and Constitution. His natural armor bonus increases to a total of +4. The dragon-blooded acquires low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to sleep and paralysis effects, and immunity to the energy type used by his breath weapon.

The negative effects of aging are removed retroactively as the dragon-blooded is reborn as a young adult half-dragon. He even re-grows any lost limbs or organs. The dragon-blooded's aging seems to stop as his life span now matches that of his dragon type (unless his happens to be longer). The dragon-blooded still acquires bonuses from aging at his original rate; he will eventually receive the minuses for aging, but at a much slower rate. ☹





# WEAL OR WOE: THE CURSED HOARD

BY ROBERT "SNORTER" FEATHER

ART BY HUGO SOLIS

## LOCATION—TROLLHEIM, THE LAND OF THE LINNORM KINGS

Young Egril Skargilsson's proudest moment was being allowed to accompany his father on the walrus hunt, but it was to be the last time they would see each other alive. His father's pursuit of his prey disturbed an angry sea-hag who ensorcelled him and compelled him to slay his companions. Egril alone survived, separated from the main party on a drifting ice-floe, watching his father's bloodied form kneeling at the hag's feet like an obedient pet.

From that day, his fury led him into the harshest terrain and weather, retrieving the heads of trolls, winter wolves, and other predators, in his search for the hag.

His exploits gained him the leadership of his tribe, and he was entrusted the heirloom of a former ruler: the axe *Käärmetappaja*. Tall as a man, its head as broad as his shoulders, the axe is rumored to have routed the great linnorm Vyalldahun and decapitated a score of his line.

Egril could not rest in councils and meetings, and continued leading warbands into the waste following rumors to the glaciers on the coast west of Kalsgard. Last winter, they discovered the glacial cave of the wrinkled sea-hag, now more skilled in sorcery. Egril left her slaves to his men, pursuing her deep into the ice to a cavern filled with loot from a score of ships. There she bargained for her life with a talisman shaped from a linnorm's claw, which she claimed would point to treasure beyond his wildest dreams. Egril took the bauble then grimly hacked off her limbs. He fed her, still alive, to his hounds while she screamed curses at him and his line. He found his father's body in the cave, and brought it back home, while his men took the haul and distributed it among the tribe as per the custom.

Egril is unaware of the talisman's true cursed nature. The claw still retains the soul, greed, and malice of one of Vyalldahun's brood. It

is consumed with hatred at the bearer of the axe, and obsessed with retrieving the treasure which the hag had stolen from its undersea lair. While the hag was able to benefit from the shapeshifting claw without falling under the linnorm's sway, poor Egril's mind was easy to enslave, despite training his will so as not to end like his father. Every night, the claw waits for his defenses to drop, then secretly attacks his mind; if successful, he marches out into the snow to transform with no memory of doing so. Each morning Egril roars his anger at the cowardly, unseen foe.

Egril's tribe is now terrified of a killer who stalks the night, shattering their doors, devouring their people. His own son and several cousins have died at the claws of the beast, their homes looted. Egril-Linnorm





hides the loot in a camouflaged pit several miles north, capped with a disc of ice and shoveled snow (Perception DC 35 to discover, or DC 30 from above).

Some tribesmen whisper that the hag Egril slew was a daughter of Baba Yaga, and many have fled, believing the tribe to be doomed. Their mangled bodies are sometimes found by travelers, who have spread the word that help is needed in Egril's Hall.

### EGRIL WITCHSLAYER

CR 9

XP 6.400

Male human barbarian 10

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +12

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, -2 rage)

**hp** 120 (10d12+50)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; DR 2/—; Resist fire 10

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft. (45 ft. without armor)

**Melee** +1 *dragon bane greataxe* +17/+12 (1d12+9/x3)

**Special Attacks** rage (25 rounds/day), rage powers (clear mind, no escape, quick reflexes, swift foot, unexpected strike)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** Egril prefers to target enemy casters, bypassing their bodyguards, and tempting them to try withdrawal. He relishes their fear when unsuccessful as he cuts them down far from the main combat.

Egril is unafraid of being surrounded, and enjoys tricking the enemy into provoking attacks of opportunity, mistakenly believing this will free an ally to cast unhindered, or when they rush him (possibly to save their caster), only to be cut down via unexpected strike.

**Morale** Egril is fearful of mental domination, and insists upon his skald protecting him from such tactics before every battle, and if possible, preparing multiple fail-safes. If this protection is lost (such as

from dispel magic), his response will be to either go all out to kill the one responsible, or order a fall back, depending on how close he believes he is to victory.

**Base Statistics** When not raging Egril has **AC** 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17; **hp** 100; **Fort** +10, **Will** +5; **Speed** 30 ft. (40 ft. without armor); **Melee** +1 *dragon bane greataxe* +15/+10 (1d12+7/x3); **Str** 18, **Con** 16; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 26; **Skills** Climb +8, Swim +6.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 22, **Dex** 14, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 28

**Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Climb +10, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +7,





Knowledge (nature) +7, Perception +12, Ride +6, Stealth +7, Survival +12, Swim +8.

**Languages** Common, Skald

**Combat Gear** *potion of protection from evil, potion of resist energy (cold)*; **Other Gear** *Käärmetappaja (+1 dragon bane greataxe), +1 light fortification breastplate, Claw of the Linnorm, boots of the winterlands, headband of inspired wisdom +2, minor ring of energy resistance (fire)*

\* Egril has twice the normal value of equipment for an NPC of his level.

## EGRIL – LINNORM FORM

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male human cursed polymorphed barbarian 10  
NE Large humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 10, flat-footed 13 (+6 natural armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, -2 rage, -1 size)

**hp** 140 (10d12+70)

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; DR 5/magic, 2/—; Resist cold 20, fire 10

**Weakness** vulnerability to fire

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 45 ft., climb 40 ft., swim 60 ft.

**Melee** bite +18 (2d6+9), 2 claws +18 (1d8+9), tail slap +13 (1d8+4)

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (2/day, 40 ft. cone, 8d8 cold, Reflex half DC 20, recharge 1d4 rounds) rage (25 rounds/day), rage powers (clear mind, no escape, quick reflexes, swift foot, unexpected strike)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** Egril-Linnorm does not possess the linnorm's supernatural flight, but is an excellent climber and swimmer.

### CLAW OF THE LINNORM

This cursed bone talisman cannot be voluntarily discarded. *The Claw of the Linnorm* can cast the following spells on its possessor each once-per-day (CL 17): *dominate person* (duration 17 minutes), *form of the dragon II* (Large linnorm; 40-foot cone of cold, resist cold 20, vulnerable to fire, no wings, climb 40 ft., swim 60 ft.). *The Claw* may have additional powers at the GM's discretion.

Given the duration of the change, he will take control as near to a settlement as possible, so as to kill, escape, and return to normal. He is immune to small fires, thanks to his ring, but still fears larger flames, and will seek to destroy their source. Otherwise, his primary targets will be anyone possessing a portion of his hoard, anyone obstructing him, and family or friends of Egril. While retaining most feats and rage powers, his larger size often makes it difficult for Egril-Linnorm to utilize them, so he will attempt to break up any formations with his breath, then tear apart anyone who still blocks his path, focusing all attacks on one target until dead, so as to cause fear and dismay in any witnesses.

**Morale** Egril-Linnorm knows how long he has to complete his kill and does not tarry. He attempts to destroy anyone he believes capable of entrapping him, but if unable to do so, he flees, hiding in snow or water.

**Base Statistics** When not raging Egril-Linnorm has **AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; **hp** 120; **Fort** +12, **Will** +5; **Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft., swim 60 ft.; **Melee** bite +16 (2d6+7), 2 claws +16 (1d8+6), tail slap +12 (1d8+3); **Str** 24, **Con** 20; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 30; **Skills** Climb +11, Swim +9.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 28, **Dex** 14, **Con** 24, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 32

**Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics +7 (+11 to jump), Climb +13, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Perception +12, Ride +6, Stealth +7, Survival +12, Swim +11.

**Languages** Common, Skald

**Gear** none (the following equipment is still active while merged: *boots of the winterlands, headband of inspired wisdom +2, ring of lesser fire resistance*)

FAN ART:  
TYLER CLARK





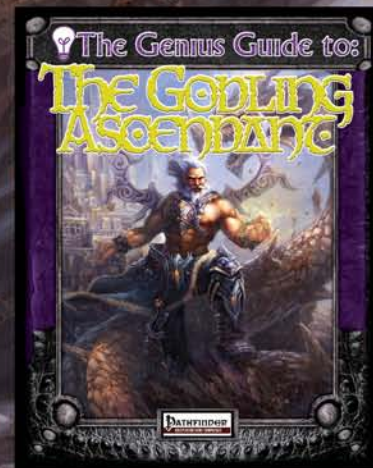
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# THE LINNORM'S CURSE

BY JOHN C. "VALMARTHEMAO" ROCK

ART BY TANYA SANGSNIT

**S**omehow, you've gotten old without dying." Imri reached up, lightly tugging on Jergal's flowing beard. "But, I see more salt than pepper in your mane."

Jergal smiled softly at the woman resting across his lap, his grey eyes warm with concern, "Save your strength."

Imri shook her head weakly, her hand falling back to her side, her silver hair flowing across Jergal's fur and rune-covered breastplate, "What's left is fading quickly." Their pose was a romantic embrace, marred only by Imri's wounds. "How is it that you have black hair, Ulfen dog?"

Jergal chuckled softly, his deep, gruff voice sounding more bark than laugh, "Dog I have always been to you, and Dog I remain. Dogs are fiercest when defending loved ones, and loyal until death. Any that wish you harm will always find my teeth at their throat."

"Good Boy," she chided. Imri closed her brilliant blue eyes, "I never doubted your ferocity..." her eyes fluttered open, their brilliance dulled with pain, "Nor your loyalty, even at the gates of death itself..."

A soft laugh began in her chest, but turned into a sickly gurgle. Her body wracked with a fit of coughing as blood flecked her perfect lips. Her golden skin washed a shade paler. She struggled to sit upright, but her body would not move.

Jergal saw her discomfort and shifted, pulling Imri so she rested with her back upon his chest; her head nestled between his shoulder and neck.

"Your beard itches, Dog."

"Mind the fleas, Lady."

Imri coughed again, but Jergal knew it was meant to be a laugh.

He cleared his throat, speaking while staring at the far wall of the

ruined keep, "My mother was a Varisian slave, my father a proud Ulfen lord. My skin and eyes are his, my hair and beard are hers."

"Your beard is hers?" Imri's laughing cough was softer, and her breathing was growing labored.

Jergal frowned, "You'll laugh yourself to death."

"It must've been quite the scandal, your father, your mother, and her beard."

Jergal snorted, admiring Imri's attempts at humor, and he wrapped his arms around her. But as his gaze shifted, any trace of joy fled. Visions of the too-recent past came unbidden to his mind:

*Jergal hovered behind Vorn as the dwarf worked on the massive lock. Like everything else in the frost giant's hold, it was oversized and more challenging than it should be. "Vorn?" Jergal asked impatiently.*

*"If ya think ya can do any blazin' better yer welcome ta try." Vorn's withering look showed his frustration. "It's like sticking yer hand in the arse of a dragon ta pull its tooth."*

*Imri drifted forward and ran her hand over the leering face carved into the stone wall beside the door. "It's inscribed with runes I don't recognize." She glanced at the gargoyle-like face, pondering the meaning of the sigils surrounding it.*

*"Get back!" Jergal pushed Imri out of the way as a gout of orange flame spat from the gaping mouth.*

*Imri pushed herself up on an elbow, "That wasn't my fault."*

*Jergal shot a glance at the dwarf.*

*Vorn shrugged, "Eh, yer both fine. Was easier to trip the damn thing an' be done with it than ta keep standin' around here in the freeze with this thrice-damned lock."*

*Merros moved up, wrapping himself deeper in his robes against the cold of the Linnorm lands.*

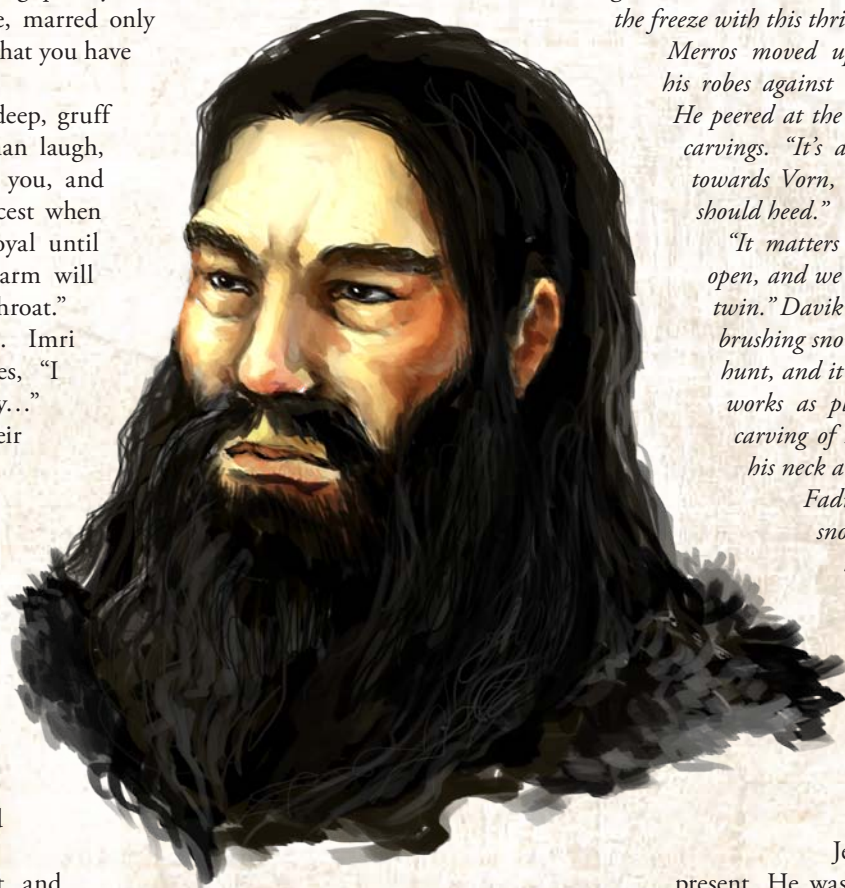
*He peered at the face, his red eyes examining the carvings. "It's a warning." The tiefling turned towards Vorn, "Something bullheaded dwarves should heed."*

*"It matters not. The way to the portal is open, and we need to make haste to this keep's twin." Davik helped Imri to her feet and began brushing snow off of her. "This is our greatest hunt, and it will be a boon to everyone if this works as planned." He kissed the wooden carving of Erastil's Bow that hung around his neck and smiled.*

*Fadrien stepped lightly through the snow, her long, slender ears flicking in annoyance as she scowled at Vorn, "Assuming the dwarf doesn't get us all killed before it begins."*

*Jergal stood and patted her shoulder, "Oh, I'm sure he'll wait. Killing us now means more work for him later."*

Jergal's thoughts returned to the present. He was still sitting with his armored back to the chill stone wall of what was once the Great Hall of a giant's fortress. Cradling Imri, he swept his eyes past her armored shoulder. They followed bright red trails of blood. Crimson covered the walls opposite where they sat, the smears ending near the floor, beneath the crumpled form of an attractive elven woman. Her fine and delicate frame was twisted and broken, her quiver of black arrows scattered across the snow-covered floor, her ornate warbow—





Radiance—in two golden halves. Fadrien Jaylyn, Ranger of the Winterwall, would never again draw breath or bow in this world.

*“Vorn, damn you, get up!” Fadrien drew and fired more rapidly than most eyes could follow, each black arrow she loosed streaked from her bow as a bolt from the sun itself, transformed into a glowing ray that poked the fell beast’s hide. Each strike blasted out a massive crater that smoldered in the frigid cold.*

*Vorn struggled to gather his wits, but blood covered his face and ran into his eyes. He flailed about to find his blade or his blunderbuss, but they were both buried beneath heavy rocks—remnants of the former ceiling. The stones had slammed Vorn to the floor when the beast’s head smashed through the roof of the Great Hall. Now, the dwarf was trapped, and he couldn’t feel his legs.*

*His blurred vision was enough to discern the flashing shots from Radiance, “Fadrien...help me...”*

*Fadrien quit firing and ran as quickly as her fleet elven feet could carry her, nimbly flitting across the rubble until she slid to a halt beside Vorn. She reached out and grasped his hand, trying to pull him from the rubble, her eyes opening wide in shock as the beast’s great spiked tail slammed into her back, piercing her and throwing her across the width of the hall.*

Fadrien’s vivid green eyes and long, cascading platinum hair had been in Jergal’s earliest childhood memories, memories dearer than any of his father or mother. Her lithe and slender shoulders carried him through his troubled youth. Her fine wrists and soft voice instructed his clumsy hands in the way of the sword and the bow. Jergal had never learned what bond held her to his father’s service, nor why she had spent years raising him to adulthood. Now a pool of crimson blood coagulated beneath her limp body, freezing in the chill winds and biting snows that sliced through the gaping hole in the shattered keep.

He looked away, and focused his attention on Imri, quelling the useless rage that threatened to swallow his grief and consume him. “Yes, my birth was quite the scandal, especially since Father was married to someone else.” He grinned mirthlessly, “Still, even a half-Varisian bastard can win honor—if he overcomes the stain and status of his birth.”

“You have your honor, Dog,” Imri’s voice was losing its crystalline clarity, losing the bell-like purity Jergal had come to love more than any sound he’d heard in the past twenty-three years. Speaking was clearly painful, yet she continued, “Today you vanquished Fellnorn the Dark, Dread Linnormlich of Stormspear, Relic of the First World, Guardian of the Icebound Tarn, and Undying Servant of the Frostborn Court. His death is your glory; his death is your freedom...” Imri trailed off, out of breath. When it returned, in slow, painful gasps, her voice was nearer to a whisper, “How fare the others?”

Jergal’s grey eyes immediately swept to the crumpled form of Fadrien and her broken bow. He swallowed the lump in his throat, “They are well, My Lady Imri. Tonight, we will set a massive blaze in the hearth, recount the day, and revel in our greatest victory to date.”

Imri smiled weakly, “Brave as you are, your voice still trembles when you lie.”

“My Lady Imri, I—”

“I am an Inquisitor of Iomedae, Dog, the same one your father

tasked you to obey and protect twenty-three years ago.” Her head lolled more fully onto his shoulder, losing the strength to keep it upright. “Do not...presume...to lie to me.” She cleared her throat, it was scratchy and she was terribly thirsty, “Davik?”

*Davik raced to Fadrien’s side, his burning haste defying the age of his bones and body. Lines of concern stitched across his face, deepening the wrinkles. He reached out to Fadrien, his blue eyes shining with a spark of divine light as his mouth began to utter the name of his god and ancient words of power.*

*But no sound escaped his voice, and no healing energy surged into Fadrien’s still form. Instead, black tendrils of dark energy shot out from the coiled form of the gargantuan beast raging overhead, and its fell energy withered Davik’s tall, thin frame.*

*His skin collapsed and compressed onto his bones like that of a mummy, his eyes shriveled from their sockets and then his body exploded into a cascade of fine grey dust.*

Jergal shook his head solemnly, “I would lie, but you would know it. Davik, son of Nijal, Priest of Erastil forever walks the forests of his lord and master in Old Deadeye’s realm.”

“Vorn, Merros, Fadrien, I saw them fall, did anyone survive?” She asked.

“Fadrien...” Jergal’s eyes slid from the blackened spot that marked Davik’s fall, to the broken bow and still form beside it, “Is gone.”

*“Vorn’s trapped, Fadrien’s down, Davik’s dead! By the accursed gods above, Merros, do something!” Jergal’s long, loping strides carried him past the tiefling sorcerer. He leapt into the air, his massive greatsword striking the twisting and writhing form of the foul, undead linnorm.*

*Merros narrowed his eyes as Jergal passed him. “Always to me, isn’t it?” Eldritch words of arcane power flowed from his lips as he crushed a copper dragon scale in his hand. His form twisted, surging into something large and reptilian. His horns grew; still resembling the tiefling’s but now much larger and befitting of a dragon.*

*Though far smaller than the massive linnormlich, Merros nimbly scaled the walls of the Great Hall and launched himself at Fellnorn the Dark, clawing and biting at the giant wyrm’s necrotic flesh. Fellnorn’s dual heads shrieked in outrage and pain as Merros assaulted him.*

*Fellnorn batted Merros away and spat acid at the transformed sorcerer. The arcing green line hissed along the Tiefling’s copper scales, some turning to a choking fume where it burned through to the flesh beneath. Merros howled in pain, writhing and thrashing upon the ground. The great undead beast’s twin jaws bit down on Merros’ neck, sending poison coursing through his veins, and tearing open his throat. The copper dragon kicked twice, diminishing and reverting to its normal form as Merros’ life slipped away.*

“I...Imri, I’ve failed them all.” Jergal wanted to let tears run unabashedly down his weathered and scarred cheeks, until they hid themselves in his black and grey beard, but he blinked them back. “My blade was keen, my arm was strong, my rage was great, but I was...”

*Jergal screamed in bestial fury, rage surging through him as Fellnorn tore at Merros. He dodged past the battling wyrms and ran to the fallen dwarf. Dropping his greatsword, Jergal grabbed Vorn’s outstretched arms and yanked him free of the rubble. Jergal fell backwards, Vorn twisting and falling across his legs.*

*Vorn coughed, blood spattering onto the floor. His legs were crushed and immobile. But a flash of yellowed teeth showed from behind his*





matted beard. “Good lad, knew you’d come for me.” His green eyes held Jergal’s own. “Take care o’ the elf. She deserves not ta be in here. Plant her somewhere green.”

The dwarfs smiled broadly and patted Jergal’s calf, “I’ve somethin from my brother in Alkenstar, fix this whole mess ya made—in my pack, quick boy, hand it ta me.”

Jergal nodded, and pushed himself up, bending forward to rummage in the dwarf’s backpack. He pulled out a large wooden keg; it was heavy and sealed with layers of wax and varnish. A black cord wrapped about its diameter and then coiled up into its end.

“Hand it here,” Vorn bit the black cord just short of where it entered the top of the cask. “Good enough for this, won’t need that much time—don’t have it anyway.” Free of the rubble, Vorn clutched the keg to his chest, and drew a flintlock pistol from his waist. “Been good ta know ya, Boy-O. Remember though, even if we kill it, its curse’ll kill us all.”

Vorn spat on the floor, “Bad hand all around.” He jerked his head to indicate Imri, “Least ya can spend it with her.” Vorn motioned to where Imri was crouched beside Merros’ fallen form, placing herself between him and the Guardian of the Icebound Tarn. “I’ll get his attention, you get the girl. Find the phylactery—then it’s done.”

Jergal shook his head, “Our noble dwarf will pick no locks and spring no traps, Davik walks in Elysium’s fields, Merros’ soul has been sucked to the Nine Hells, and Fadrien... fairest Fadrien is no more... we are doomed unless we find the lich’s soul.”

Jergal picked up his sword, and patted Vorn’s shoulder, “I will follow you shortly, keep a spot for me at the bar—in whatever heaven or hell will take you.” He then sprinted for Imri.

Vorn stabilized the pistol as best he could, resting it so the pan caught the tip of the keg’s cord. He squeezed the trigger, the hammer dropped, sparks flew and the gun discharged with a crack of thunder. The black cord sparked to life, a small flame racing towards the interior of the keg.

The hard metal ball caught the beast in one of its lifeless white eyes, destroying it. The linnormlich spun about, ignoring Imri and Jergal, its attention focused solely on the source of its pain. It arced up, then drove both heads down, smashing the dwarf and tearing Vorn apart at the waist as both sets of fangs scissored through him. The explosion caught both heads, disintegrating them in a flash of fire and burning necrotic flesh. Fellnorn’s voice shrieked into the ether as his body dissolved in a flash of negative energy.

Jergal braced for the dark wave, but Imri stood before him, blocking it with her body even as she called upon Iomedae. She collapsed into his arms, her body bearing all the injuries, and no dark power touched Jergal.

Imri’s hands fell numbly to her sides, “Then the linnorm’s curse claims us all—except you, my noble Dog...”

Jergal cleared his throat, “Lady Imri, there must be...”

Imri sagged against Jergal’s chest, “I asked Iomedae for a miracle, and she answered.” A green heart-shaped gem rolled out of her hand and onto the floor, pulsing with dark energy. “Fellnorn’s phylactery.

Take it.”

“My Lady—”

Imri opened her eyes, their former gemlike sheen opaque and dull, “Ever have you borne the brunt of our grim labors, ever have you led the charge, ever have you saved the day—for our collective glory, or the glory of those we served. Now you alone will bear the honor of this deed, as you deserve.” Imri’s face hardened, her voice strengthened, “Jergal the Black, Son of Thorgrim, Son of Ulfric, Bastard Lord of Frozen Citadel, I, Imri Kaldessi, Inquisitor of Iomedae, hold your vows fulfilled... and I...” Imri coughed, and dark blood trailed from the corner of her lips, “I release you... from my service...” she smiled weakly, “if not my heart.”

Jergal blinked in shock, “I am not... worthy.”

Imri closed her now sightless eyes, the linnorm’s virulent poison closing down upon her life just as its heavy jaws had done to Vorn’s broken body, “I know... when you... lie...”

Jergal hugged her to him as wracking sobs shook the large man’s body. Cold wind and icy snow blew about the room, falling upon them both. In this frozen eternity, he cried silently, anger and rage clashed within him, but there was nothing he could do. Imri was gone.

He stood slowly, carefully placing Imri’s body upon the cold stones of the Great Hall. Crossing her arms over her chest, he

delicately twined the long, thin fingers of her left hand around the symbol of Iomedae—a small longsword inscribed within a golden sun. It had hung from a golden chain around Imri’s slender neck, and was echoed by a matching design upon her breastplate and another emblazoned into the hilt of her longsword. Jergal picked Imri’s blade from where it had fallen and placed it along the right side of the aasimar’s body, clasping her cold fingers around its hilt.

He then moved from Imri’s side, recovering his fallen companions, laying them to rest beside the Inquisitor. The arcane cold would soon consume the entire keep. And, just as it was burying and entombing the frigid lands of the linnorm, it would form a protective barrier of ice over his fallen companions. For now, it was all he could do.

Jergal hefted his massive blade onto his shoulder. He would return to Kalsgard with the wyrm’s heart and the sword of his forefathers—at last recovered from Fellnorn’s lair.

It was enough to claim his place as a Linnorm King. A kingdom would absolve him of his bastard status, granting him the lands and power that he could never inherit from his father.

Yet, before he could leave, he returned to Imri’s side and knelt down, “Imri Kaldessi, never have you been mistaken. But, in this you are gravely wrong: The curse is not dying; it’s carrying the guilt of living... I did not escape the Linnorm’s Curse, you did.” ☉





# TALES OF THE ARCANE ARCHAEOLOGISTS: ARCANISTS ON ICE

BY RYAN COSTELLO, JR

ART BY JESS DOOR

**T**he Arcane Archaeologists work together to satisfy their shared need to understand the history and happenings of the Inner Sea Region. The muscular and dwarf-haired Ulfen men and women are known for being as rugged as they are truculent, everything a mage is not. Regardless, the intrepid Arcane Archaeologists braved permafrost summers, whiteout winters, and white dragon shadows to dig through the snow and secrets of Golarion's northern-most nation, the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

Formally, the Arcane Archaeologists are: Mazi Verrechia, a human historian with an ear for the myths told by tribes with no love of the written word; Ahiyo Kyishi, a Tian elf whose perspective gained from dabbling in many arcane cultures influences how spells are cast across Golarion; Redaluccala "Red" Daipeati, a gnome tinkerer who brings as many new ideas for magical adventuring gear to the places he visits as he takes when he leaves; Leclair Shnag, a half-orc cryptozoologist who takes credit for every beast slain by an adventurer who has read her reports.

## A PINCH OF WARMTH

Local mages—and contrary to popular opinion, there are a few Ulfen arcanists—must learn to cast spells outfitted in the layers of hide debilitating to somatic spell components but necessary to manage the glacial environment. Visiting mages are not often so trained nor as acclimated. *Endure elements* does wonders to survive the climate, but nothing against the cold-based attacks of many monsters found in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. Mazi Verrechia set about designing a spell to help defend against the notorious linnorms that populate the area as well as other threats like frost worms and winter wolves.

### STEAL HEAT

**School** transmutation; **Level** cleric 5, druid 4, ranger 4, sorcerer/wizard 5, witch 5

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** V, S

**Range** touch

**Target** creature touched

**Duration** instantaneous; see text

**Saving Throw** Fort half; see text; **Spell Resistance** yes

You steal body heat from your target and use it to bolster your own resistance to cold. The less heat the target's body generates, the more painful it is for the target to have its body heat extracted.

On a successful touch attack, the target suffers 1d6 points of damage per 2 caster levels (maximum 7d6). If the target has cold resistance or immunity, you instead deal 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 15d6). You gain cold resistance equal to your caster level for one round. On a successful Fortitude save, the target takes half damage and you do not gain cold resistance.

## SNOW PARASITES

Let none say Leclair Shnag is above nit picking. Her primary mission in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings was to track down a miniscule vermin known to leave Ulfen raiders as drained husks of muscle and braided hair.

The arctic is not known for its dense populations or thriving animal life. Only resourceful creatures and people are able to withstand hostile environments like that of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. Although the belief that only the strong survive is especially true when resources are hotly fought over, if what a creature hunts for is of no use to any other creature, it can easily manage the harsh lifestyle. Such is true of a microscopic threat that infuriates Ulfen tribes as often as it catches them off guard. True, unless the Ulfen whose blood ice ticks feed off count.

Ice ticks are parasites found exclusively in arctic lands despite not being acclimated to cold once born. Their survival hinges on their prenatal ability to withstand even the coldest recorded temperatures on Golarion, and their ability to camouflage amongst the icicles in Ulfen hair.

### Ice Tick

*The icicles dangling from the Ulfen's beard quiver for an instant before cracking open and releasing a fog of white insects.*

### ICE TICK SWARM

CR 7

XP 3,200

N Fine vermin (swarm)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 20, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +8 size)

**hp** 75 (10d8+30)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

**Defensive Abilities** swarm traits; Immune mind-affecting effects, weapon damage

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

**Melee** swarm (2d6 plus blood drain and distraction)

**Special Attacks** ambush birth, blood drain (1d4 Constitution), distraction (DC 18)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 1, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

**Feats** Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Climb +10, Stealth +18; **Racial Modifiers** uses Dexterity for Climb checks

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Ambush Birth (Ex):** Ice tick eggs are immune to cold and have a +20 racial bonus on Stealth checks in icy and snowy environments. A cluster of ice tick eggs hatches into a swarm within 1d4+1 rounds of being subject to temperature above freezing. Ice ticks attack the nearest blooded creature once hatched. Remove disease destroys any ice tick eggs on a host, but has no effect on the swarm once hatched.



Ice tick eggs are airborne microbes caught in arctic winds. They remain fertile for years, traveling further around the northern continent than most arctic explorers. When enough ice tick eggs cling together, they fertilize one another. Once fertilized, ice tick eggs hatch into an ice tick swarm soon after entering temperatures above freezing, such as by a fire at an Ulfen raider camp.

Ice ticks work together to feed off a creature's blood. As they feed, they lay their eggs, which are swept away by the slightest breeze, sending some future generation of ice ticks out into the world. No matter how thoroughly a population believes they have wiped out the ice tick threat, there is no way of knowing when the next ice tick infestation will blow by.

### ACCLIMATED CASTING

There is a misconception that the best environment to develop energy-based magic is away from that energy. Pedestrian thinkers do not believe a mage could see the results of a new fire spell, for example, cast in a desert or within a volcano. There is truth in such ignorant thought. A mage cannot see how well the magic has worked; a mage can feel it.

Ahiyo Kyishi crossed the Crown of the World once on his way to the Inner Sea Region. His journey tempted him with the powers of cold energy, a temptation he was thrilled to put behind him when he analyzed its full potential in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

He observed common traits among victims of the cold that cold-based spells only brush upon. Rather than develop a new spell based on these traits, the Tian elf decided to influence a suite of spells with a touch of cold metamagic.

#### Frigid Spell (Metamagic)

You cause creatures to briefly suffer the effects of long-term exposure to subfreezing temperatures.

**Benefit:** In addition to the normal effects of the modified spell, the subject is also slowed, as the *slow* spell. If the spell normally allows a saving throw, on a successful save the subject is instead fatigued. If the spell does not normally allow a saving throw, the subject of the

frigid spell is allowed a Fortitude save to reduce the metamagic effect. If the modified spell has the cold descriptor, the effect of the frigid spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to your casting ability score bonus (Wisdom for clerics, Intelligence for wizards, etc). Otherwise the effect lasts one round.

A frigid spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

### TRUDGING THE SNOW

"Red" Daipeati loved picking through all the different equipment that exists to help explorers manage harsh conditions like the Lands of the Linnorm Kings: dried tinder, bivvy bags, packs, tools, and so many different hats. The equipment in which he saw the most potential was the crampon.

This pick-soled footwear that straps onto a shoe, boot, or bare foot already helps hikers manage treacherous arctic and subarctic terrain. With a touch of magic and a tweaked design, *crampons of ice gliding* can help all the more.



#### CRAMPONS OF ICE GLIDING

**Aura** strong transmutation; **CL** 13th

**Slot** feet; **Price** 7,500 gp; **Weight** 3 lb.

#### DESCRIPTION

These metal cleats strap to the base of any nonmagical footwear, granting the wearer increased mobility in the snow. The wearer gains a +5 bonus on Acrobatics, Climb, and Survival checks in icy or snowy environments.

Additionally, using the cold energy stored within the crampons of ice gliding, the wearer can cause an ice bridge to form under his feet in any environment. The ice bridge allows him to ignore the effects of difficult terrain. In most environments, the ice bridge crumbles behind the wearer as he moves. In a cold environment, the ice bridge lasts until the end of the wearer's next turn, allowing any creature that enters a square in which the wearer has tread to ignore the effects of difficult terrain in that square. The wearer can use this ability up to 10 rounds per day. These rounds need not be consecutive but they must be spent in 1-round increments.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *ice body*\*; **Cost** 3,750 gp

\*See *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game:*

*Ultimate Magic* ☉





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# OF CHANCE AND SKILL: PILLARS: A GAME FOR HARROW

BY GREGG REECE

ART BY DAVE MALLON

**T**hough popular throughout the Inner Sea region, some people believe that card games using Harrow cards are sacrilegious, holding those mystical cards as signs of fate, or as superstitious nonsense taking away from proper worship of the gods. Of course, I'm in the camp that thinks they're just games and there's no more harm in it than any other game. You might end up a few copper lighter at the end of a Harrow game, but neither the cards nor the Gods have ever made a sign to me that there is a problem with it.

The game of Pillars is usually played just to pass the time, but you can earn a few coins with it if you're good. To win, you need to collect more pillars than anyone else at the table by either raiding or scavenging until everyone runs out of cards. Now, that probably sounds like a load of gibberish, so let's take it one part at a time so that you can get the gist of it.

These pillars you want to collect are the three cards in a single column in the same suit (if you're going by the words the fortune tellers use, we're talking about the cards in either the law, neutrality, or chaos). The good, neutral, and evil cards that make up each of those columns taken together is your pillar.

For example, the Betrayal (neutral evil), Twin (neutral), and Theatre (neutral good) cards are all part of the neutral pillar for the suit of Crowns.

When the game starts, deal everyone five cards face down. The dealer then places the remaining cards in a stack face down (we will call this place the Fields) and flips over the top card, setting it face up next to the Fields, and this face-up card is called the Dumps. After that, the person to the left of the dealer takes their turn, continuing play 'round to the left of players.

Your turn has four parts. First, you harvest and draw cards from the Fields, until you are fully stocked at five cards. Second, set aside any pillars you have in your hand, face-up. Now you've got to make a choice: raid or scavenge.

If you're raiding, choose a player and ask them for a specific suit (Books, Crowns, Hammers, Keys, Shields, and Stars). If they have any cards in that suit, they must give you one of them. If they don't, draw a card from the top of the Fields stack.

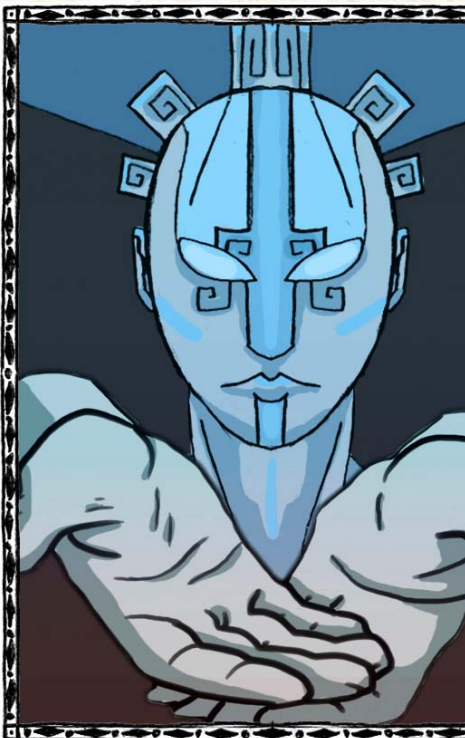
If you didn't choose to raid, you can scavenge, picking the top cards of the Dumps. The advantage is you know exactly which card you're getting, but it's not likely to be a card you want. And yes, you must pick the top card from the Dumps—can't go digging through all of that trash!

Finally, you must discard down to only five cards putting your extras into the Dumps.

Everyone keeps playing until both the Dumps and the Fields are completely empty. If the Fields stack runs out you can take the Dumps stack, shuffling them together to make a new Fields stack.

The person with the most pillars at the end of game is the winner. If you're putting a few coppers on the game, then the number of pillars you have are how many coins each player owes you. However, being as you're not able to look at people's hands, I don't really recommend putting money on this game if the people you're playing against are less than reputable.

Some mystics say that the pillars you end up with say something about your fortunes and that the mystical power of the cards persists even though a child's game such as this. However, I personally wouldn't put any coin on it. ☹





# THE COVEN GUARDIANS

BY MARGHERITA "BARDESS" TRAMONTANO

ART BY MATTHEW STINSON

**I**riseden has few friends beyond its borders. The Linnorm Kings to the west have not forgotten the Winter War that birthed their neighbor—  
**Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: The Inner Sea World Guide**

A witch coven is a fearsome enemy both for good adventurers and grim villains. There are plenty of reasons not to come at odds with numerous angry and powerful witches. But sometimes the coven members are not so powerful. Sometimes they're hidden in hostile lands and persecuted by enemy churches, superstitious barbarians, and witch hunters. Sometimes they are bound to an oath of peace and nonviolence. In these cases, vigorous young men and women—possibly the children or loved ones of the witches—are chosen and trained to protect the coven from any danger or persecute its enemies. Even in times of peace, any profane intruder who dares to come too near to a witchcraft ritual or steal prohibited treasures may face the swords and spells of these coven guardians.

## WITCH KNIGHT (MAGUS ARCHETYPE)

*Some magi are trained from witch covens to defend and protect their members, and possess spells and abilities more natural and wild.*

**Witch's Familiar:** At 1st level, a witch knight magus forms a close bond with a familiar, a creature that teaches him magic and helps to guide him along his path. This functions like the witch ability of the same name. This ability replaces the magus's spellbook and spell combat gained at 1st level.

**Spell Combat:** At 3rd level, a witch knight magus learns to cast spells and wield his weapons at the same time. This ability replaces the magus arcana gained at 3rd level.

**Bewitched Arcana:** The witch knight receives access to the following arcana. Moreover, if he chooses the Jinx Blending arcana (from Super Genius Games' New Magus Arcana), he can add the selected witch spell to his list as a spell of the same level. If the witch knight chooses the Spell Blending arcana to learn a wizard/sorcerer spell, the selected spell is added to his list as a spell of one level higher.

**Bewitched Strike (Sp):** A witch knight magus can cast his patron spells using the spellstrike ability, even if the spells are not touch-attack spells.

**Greater Spell Access:** At 19th level, the witch knight gains access to an expanded spell list. He learns and places 14 spells from the witch spell list into his familiar as magus spells of their witch level. The witch knight gains two of each of the following witch spells not on the magus spell list: 0-level, 1st-level, 2nd-level, 3rd-level, 4th-level, 5th-level, and 6th-level. He can ignore the somatic component of these spells, casting

them without the normal chance of spell failure. This replaces the normal greater spell access ability.

**Spells:** A witch knight magus chooses a witch patron at 1st level and adds the patron spells of 1st to 6th level to his magus spell list.

**Magus Arcana:** The following magus arcana complement the witch knight archetype: broad study, dispelling strike, empowered magic, and jinx blending.

## WITCH HOUND (INQUISITOR ARCHETYPE)

*The witch hound is the witch hunter's antithesis, a lone wolf infiltrating strange dungeons to fetch eldritch secrets and using hexes to battle the enemies of the coven he's sworn to serve.*

**Hex (Su):** At 1st level, a witch hound inquisitor picks one hex from the witch's hex class feature. He gains the benefit of or uses that hex as if he were a witch of a level equal to his magus level. He gains an additional hex at 3rd level and every three levels thereafter. At 12th level, the witch hound can instead choose a major hex. A witch hound cannot select an individual hex more than once. This ability replaces the inquisitor's domain and teamwork bonus feats.



**Houndmaster:** A witch hound's inquisitor levels stack with his levels in any class that gives a familiar, animal companion, bonded mount, or an outsider servant of any type for the purpose of determining any abilities that depend on the master's level. He doesn't obtain a familiar or a companion with this ability alone. If the witch hound inquisitor has levels in more than one class which gives a companion, he must choose to what class he will apply this benefit.

**Trapfinding:** Disable Device is a class skill for the witch hound inquisitor. At 2nd level, he gains the trapfinding ability as a rogue of the same level. If the witch hound has levels in another class that gives trapfinding, these levels stack. This ability replaces track. ☉





## PERIGLACIAL LANDFORMS AND HAZARDS

(REASONS WHY YOUR PLAYERS SHOULD NOT BECOME LACKADAISICAL ABOUT THE FAR NORTH)

BY DAWN "DARK SASHA" FISCHER

ART BY TODD WESTCOT

### PERMAFROST

The periglacial zone is concurrent with the region of permanently frozen ground, known as permafrost. Permafrost may or may not have a layer above it which melts in the spring or summer and freezes again in the fall and winter. Typically, the thinner the seasonally-thawed layer above the permafrost, the less vegetation can grow upon it. There may be an incomplete vegetation cover consisting of low shrubs, herbaceous plants and dwarf species of trees, and thus somewhat more food availability for animals. But in the higher latitudes, the true tundra, vegetation and food is extremely sparse. Animals that have adapted to live in this zone typically only do so in the summer months and migrate to lower latitudes for the winter months. This should result in a fairly significantly higher DC for survival checks in the fall through winter months, depending on how tough you as the GM wish to be on your players. I would suggest not less than a DC of 15 for survival checks in the summer months. This should include not merely food gathering attempts (which can be circumvented with magic) but also attempts to notice and avoid other hazards of this region.

### SOLIFLUCTION "SOIL FLOW"

If the soil is saturated with water, the soggy mass may move downhill at a very slow and imperceptible rate. If it is directly associated with a frozen layer beneath the active layer of the soil, the more specific term, gelifluction applies. What this causes is added pressure on structures built within the region where such soil flow does occur. Collapse of structures or retaining walls may result surprisingly quickly if the residents are unaware of such processes or do not observe them occurring in time to prevent collapse. Associated hazards from gelifluction include snow and rock avalanches on slopes. Mud flows and debris flows break out of gelifluction lobes and sheets and may suddenly flow down canyons to immerse persons or structures.

### NIVATION

Snow patches that persist in sheltered locations on a slope may

produce nivation hollows after only a few seasons. The snowmass produces a localized source of water around its edges. Some of the water percolates through the downhill edge of the snowbank and carries away any fine particles from the rock and soil beneath it. Over time, a hollow appears with the snowbank resting atop it, slowly enlarging itself. Over time, such processes, combined with further accumulation of snow freezing to ice underneath the snowmass, may contribute to the formation of glaciers.

### FREEZING AND HYDROFRACTURING

Solid rock formations may be broken apart over time due to the alternating freezing and thawing of water that finds its way into cleavages between planes of minerals within the rocks. Over time this creates fractures due to the fact that water when thawed takes up less space than when frozen. Water will collect in cracks and during cold months freeze, widening the cracks. Sudden rock falls due to separation from these processes are common on steep slopes, canyons and mountains.

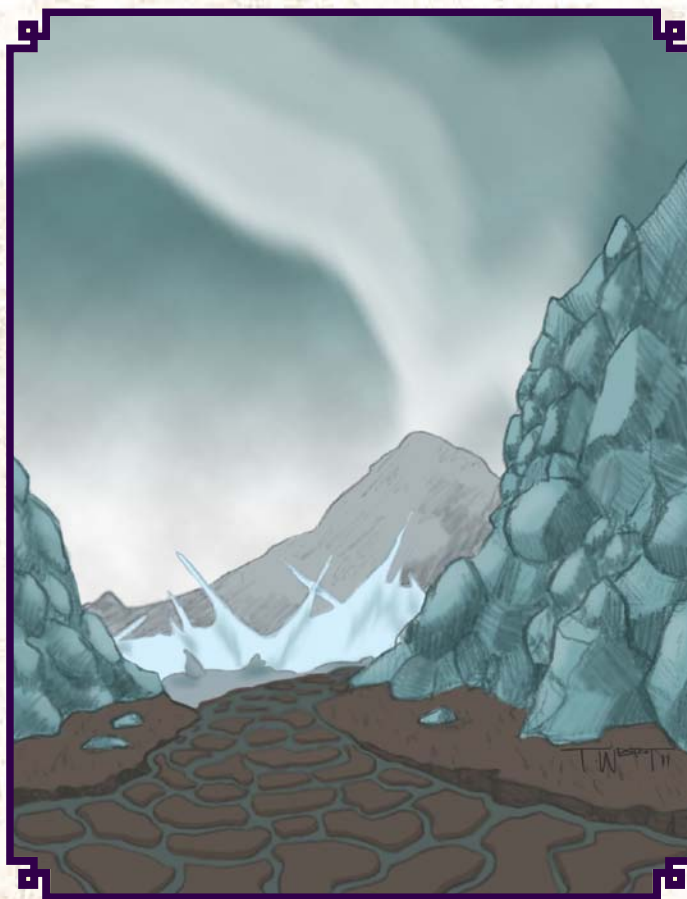
### ICE WEDGE POLYGONS

These can cover many thousands of miles. Each polygon may be from 10 feet to 100 feet in size and is outlined by shallow troughs, beneath which is a wedge-shaped foliated mass of ice, a meter or more broad at the top and extending downward from six to fifteen feet. It begins with seasonal freezing and thawing and may explosively develop vertical cracks in the ground that begin an inch wide and several feet deep and grow progressively over several seasons. In the spring, water

from the active layer seeps down the crack and refreezes in the cold permafrost. During the summer, warming and expansion of the frozen layer causes sediments to be upturned and deformed against the ice wedge. Each winter the freezing-cracking is repeated along the initial wedge and each summer new layers of ice are introduced to widen the wedge. Over several centuries an entire plain may be covered by these polygons. This process turns an otherwise flat plain into difficult terrain.

The combination of intense frost action, permafrost and the other landform hazards mentioned above as well as incomplete vegetation cover,

seasonal flowing of rivers, and strong winds turn periglacial plains into wastelands of patterned ground, rubble-strewn hill slopes, gelifluction lobes and sheets; and seasonal bogs or shallow lakes and mountainous regions add hazards, like rock glaciers and massive talus piles. ☉







# HERO'S HOARD: THE SAMPO

BY DAWN "DARK SASHA" FISCHER

ART BY CARLOS TORREBLANCA

**T**he *Sampo* is a uniquely Finnish artifact from the Kalevala. This series of stories tells how the *Sampo* was forged by the hero and legendary smith Ilmarinen. The sorceress Louhi steals the *Sampo* causing Ilmarinen's land to fall on hard times. Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen, the chief hero of the Kalevala, set out to retrieve the *Sampo* from Louhi's stronghold. They succeed in defeating Louhi, but the *Sampo* is destroyed.

The roots of this myth reach far back to the dark past when the people who were to become the Finns still lived in the Ural Mountain region in modern day north-central Russia. The *Sampo* is thought to be a metaphor for the stellar dome, as viewed by the peoples of ancient Siberia, with its axis at the Polestar (The Nail of the North). This cosmic model is reflected in the Sacred World Tree with its three, seven, or nine levels, and the shaman's tent with its central pole and starry cover.

The tales tell of the theft of the *Sampo*. Some scholars believe it is a metaphor for the upsetting of the celestial frame and movement of the celestial center to another place. Since the *Sampo* is really the Polestar, the Nail of the North, it is the equivalent of saying that the Polestar moves. In fact, the Earth's axis wobbles, giving an appearance of movement to the Polestar, a cycle roughly 26,000 years in period. Astronomers refer to this phenomenon as the precession of the equinoxes. Does this myth indicate ancient Finnish awareness of this astronomical occurrence?

## SAMPO (MINOR ARTIFACT)

**Aura** strong conjuration; **CL** 20th

**Slot** none; **Weight** varies

### DESCRIPTION

Made from a piece of the World Tree, this artifact brings good fortune to its bearer. The *Sampo* has four forms each with a different power. The bearer can change the *Sampo*'s form by concentrating as a full-round action. The four forms and their associated powers are:

**Astrolabe:** In this form the *Sampo* provides a +10 circumstance bonus on Profession (sailor) checks.

**Driftwood:** The *Sampo*'s default form is that of a tree branch. The bearer of the *Sampo* in this form gains a +4 luck bonus on all saving throws, attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks.

**Magic Mill:** The *Sampo* grows to the size of a small building. The magic mill operates under its own power, requiring no impetus from water or beast. The *Sampo* can take this form only if there is sufficient space. The magic mill has the power to turn

raw material into almost any object. The mill can produce a *major creation* at will; objects created are permanent, but the user must provide the mill with material components (of any sort) of equal value to the created object.

**Wooden Bowl:** In this form, the *Sampo* can create food and water once per day.

### DESTRUCTION

The *Sampo* can be destroyed by being flown to the highest point in the sky and then dropped into the deepest part of the sea.







# IN HELL'S EMBRACE, PART IV

BY DANE PITCHFORD

ART BY ISAAC ROYO

**Y**ou should have slain me first,” their father said as he gazed upon the three armed men before him, “rather than wasting your time with my apprentices.”

“You’ll die anyway, old man. The order matters little,” Rhevan growled, leveling his sword at their father’s robed figure. His cowl cast his face in a deep, unnatural shadow, while his eyes glowed like tiny coals. Ailyn had never seen her father like this, but there was no mistake. This was Verik Dartherian at his most powerful.

The might of the Hells filled his normally thin, almost frail form. Nearby, the air itself seemed to suddenly bulge outward. A horrible wailing filled the room, but ceased as the distortion faded. Even without the mages’ direction, the spell was completing itself.

“And you’re a fool if you think you can fight me, Rhevan. I taught you better than this. Disrupting a summoning at the height of the spell? You may get your wish, boy, but the price will be your life if the veil tears.”

Rhevan snorted, flashing a wicked grin and taking another step toward their father.

“I’ll deal with whatever monstrosities manage to worm their way through. But you...you, I’ll relish killing.”

The younger man tensed, and from Ailyn’s spot pressed against the far wall she could barely see his lips move as he held his hand over the glowing blade of his sword. In a flash of light, he closed the distance between himself and Verik, slashing violently at the wizard.

Her brother was an accomplished fencer, but Ailyn saw none of that

finesse as he lashed out at their father. His attacks were almost bestial, his face contorted in rage, as Verik’s ebony staff and shimmering arcane shields turned aside each blow.

Lightning-fast, Verik knocked Rhevan’s sword wide, his staff whirling as he brought it around to slam its length against her brother’s ribs. There was a soft crunch. Rhevan cried out, staggered and nearly dropped his sword. Ailyn winced, looking away, to find Arden and Thorn circling around the room’s edges, trying to surround the mage.

“Father, look out!” Her voice was almost lost in the din of another sudden chorus of wails. The air next to her shuddered and rippled. Startled, Ailyn scrambled back as cracks began to spider their way across the distortion. She could see the tips of claws working through the cracks, trying to widen them, only to vanish again as they closed.

Thankfully, Verik heard her warning. He jammed the butt of his staff into Rhevan’s gut, uttering a word. It flashed with energy, and the blow sent his son flying halfway across the room to land with a pained grunt at the circle’s center, his sword clattering across the floor. Then Verik spun in a circle, his crimson robes flaring around him.

Thorn was the next to attack, rushing the mage and cutting across with a blade of mundane steel. Ailyn let out another scream as she saw it shear through Verik’s robe, then blinked, watching as the fabric fluttered to the ground without a body inside of them. A ray of searing

heat sprang from above and behind Thorn. He let out a blood-curdling scream of pain as it punched through his chest.

Verik smirked, now hovering in the air and clad in his familiar, close-fitting attire of black and crimson silk. His face was lined with age and his hair, stark white, but there was nothing else about the man that spoke of age or frailty. He exuded power. His eyes blazed bright crimson as he twirled his staff toward Arden.

This time, however, no ray sprang forth. Verik merely smiled, and the end of his gnarled staff began to glow.

“Die.”

Arden lurched as the glow sprang up around him, staggering and clutching his chest before falling to the ground beside Thorn’s smoldering form. Verik lingered over them, gloating. Another distortion appearing near him, and as he slowly rotated toward it, Rhevan stooped to pick up

his fallen sword.

“You’re still alive?” Verik asked calmly. His words held a hint of surprise that brought a rough laugh from Rhevan, who spat a goblet of blood onto the marble floor and lifted his empty gaze to meet the burning coals of his father’s eyes.

“I’ll live for as long as it takes to kill you,” he spat, lifting his sword.





With a bellow that sounded almost victorious, he swung it in an arc before him. As he did, the air contorted just in front of him. The enchanted steel bit into the distortion, and it shattered like glass. A jagged hole gaped in the air before him, but Ailyn could see it didn't lead to any of the Hells she knew. What began to swarm forth were not devils.

Clearly surprised, Verik flew backward, his gaze falling on Ailyn for an instant as he sought something else in the chamber.

"Run, dearest," she heard him whisper, as if next to her, before his gaze shifted away and found what he had sought. Something in her father's command broke her paralysis and spurred her strength. She scrambled to her feet, bolting from the chamber as she heard the sound of another distortion shattering. Her father bellowed in Infernal above the din of wails as both demons and devils streamed into the chamber.

As she ran, Ailyn felt tears streaming down her face. Both her father and brother would die. She would be next, be it at the hands of demons, devils or her brother's men. She nearly fell as she reached the stairs leading back up into the manor itself.

She took the stone steps two at a time, away from the horrors behind her. And yet, the charge in the air didn't abate. Instead, it seemed to grow, reverberating in her soul as she tried to remember in her frantic state which corridor led to the manor's main hall.

Rounding a corner, Ailyn paused, sagging against a wall to catch her breath. Something was wrong. The out-of-control energy from the summoning chamber below had spread throughout the house, and it was still growing. Already she could see more distortions wavering in the air, creatures from warring planes trying to claw their way through.

"No...no, I...have to keep running," she panted softly, steeling herself and spurring her burning legs into a run again. Behind her, she heard a sound like breaking glass, and an unbearable heat as hellfire spewed forth from the tear in reality. Stone itself began to burn in the infernal onslaught. Another gout of flame burst forth before her.

Ailyn screamed, tripping as she tried to keep from running straight into it and landing flat on her back. Her way was blocked. Still, she pushed herself to her feet again, breathing hard as she tore open the door of the nearest room. It was a servant's bedchamber. Whoever had dwelled in it was dead, or soon would be. Pressing the door shut behind her, Ailyn sagged to the floor and began to sob uncontrollably, the tears flowing down her pale cheeks.

Fire. Heat. Pain. That was her world. Her head swam as she tried to comprehend what was happening. She knew she was burning. She could smell it, but her body was strangely numb. There were no walls, only sheets of flame that surrounded her, dominated her. Already, darkness crept into the corners of her vision.

Then, something moved in the flames. It was impossible. A delusion, moments before death. Yet there she was. A woman, dark and beautiful, her skin pale and her hair like night. Wings of raven feathers flared behind her, scattering the flames as she stooped. A cool touch, fingertips painful against seared flesh, but it felt good. She ached for more as that dark creature smiled down at her.

"You are strong child...to linger, when others fall," she said, her voice a wicked chorus tugging at her soul. "Your blood...is familiar. A strong line. But...I can make you stronger. You'd like that, wouldn't you, little one?"

She tried to speak, to say yes, but all that came were pain and a dry rasp. The creature understood. Her smile never faltered as she leaned close, those perfectly crimson lips meeting the girl's.

In that instant, Ailyn was bathed in a different sort of hellfire, a fire that tore into her soul, even as she felt something dark and malignant worm its way inside of her being. She knew she should be repulsed, but it took away the pain. Ailyn let herself fall into that hellish embrace. As the world faded to darkness, she saw her brother's face flash before her eyes one last time.

\* \* \*

Ailyn awoke beneath the night sky, the scent of char filling her nose. The pain was gone, a lingering memory. She felt...wonderful. As she pushed herself to her hands and knees, she realized she was no longer in the manor. She could see a thick column of smoke rising into the air nearby. Somehow she had been saved and left unscathed in an alleyway.

Her last moments within the manor were unclear...she remembered fire, and agony, and a woman...and then something approaching ecstasy before it all went black.

Shakily, she stood, the burnt tatters of her dress sloughing from her pale flesh. She felt...different. That woman, that creature, had changed her. And there was something else...an itch, a tug at her consciousness. She realized the sensation was familiar.

Rhevan was alive. She knew it, somehow. The knowledge that he and some of his men had escaped was certain, as certain as the cool cobblestones under her feet. As certain as the fact that she would find him and every last one of his brutish sellswords...and, one by one, they would die. ☹

\* \* \*



# HERO'S HOARD: TREASURE FIT FOR A (LINNORM) KING

BY ERIC 'BOXHEAD' HINDLEY

ART BY CARLOS TORREBLANCA

**T**ailoring treasure to the frozen north can be easy—after all, *boots of the winterlands*, *rings of cold resistance*, *horns of Valhalla*, and many more items lie within the pages of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*. Couple that with basic survival items like the *ring of sustenance* and *sustaining spoon*, plus a few magic axes, helmets, and shields; and it seems like a GM is spoiled for choice when it comes to rewarding adventurers for daring the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

Of course, the appearance of these core items can be altered to better suit the environment of the frozen land of the Vikings; torcs can replace necklaces, rings can become bracelets or arm bands (while still filling the ring slot) and cloaks can be made from the skins of fierce beasts such as dragons, yetis, or bears. Many items should bear runes and precious stones, as ostentatious displays show others that you are a mighty warrior not to be trifled with.

However, this plethora of items can also be a double-edged sword as many of these items hearken back to past editions and have a long and storied history—which of course also means that many players already have tales of heroes who have found these exact items (for some, time and time again). To help ease the ennui of players and the sleepless nights of GMs, here are a few new magic items for your next campaign in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

## TROLL CHALICE

**Aura** moderate conjuration; **CL** 9th

**Slot** —; **Price** 45,000 gp; **Weight** 4 lbs.

### DESCRIPTION

A gnarled troll's hand serves as the stem and base for this battered copper bowl. When the bowl is filled, it imbues its contents with some of a troll's healing powers. Filling a *troll chalice* is a standard action that provokes an attack of

opportunity and requires half a pint of potable water. The user can then drink the contents (as a potion). This provides the drinker with fast healing 5 for 2d6 minutes. A troll chalice can only be used once per day in this fashion.

Any cure potion placed in a *troll chalice* is automatically empowered, as if by the metamagic feat. Rumors persist that various other liquids placed in a *troll chalice* will have different effects, but these effects are left to the GM's discretion.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, *breath of life*; **Cost** 22,500 gp

## BEAR TRAP OF IMMOBILITY

**Aura** moderate enchantment; **CL** 9th

**Slot** —; **Price** 9,000 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

### DESCRIPTION

This large steel trap consists of a set of rune-covered, spring-loaded jaws. It functions as a bear trap (see the *Advanced Player's Guide*). Any living creature damaged by the trap must make a DC 17 Will save or be paralyzed, as if by *hold monster*. The trap's spell effect resets 24 hours after being triggered.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *hold monster*; **Cost** 4,500 gp

## HORNED HELM

**Aura** faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd

**Slot** head; **Price** 12,000 gp; **Weight** 7 lbs.

### DESCRIPTION

This simple helmet sports an impressive pair of bull-like horns. When the wearer charges, he can make a gore attack with the horns in addition to his normal attacks. This is treated as a secondary natural attack (made at the wearer's full base attack bonus -5) that deals 1d8 points of damage plus half the wearer's Strength modifier.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *bull's strength*; **Cost** 6,000 gp

## STATUETTE OF THE BURROWING LINNORM

**Aura** moderate transmutation and evocation; **CL** 9th  
**Slot** —; **Price** 10,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

### DESCRIPTION

This small brass statuette is shaped like a sinewy wingless dragon. When a command word is spoken, the statuette comes to life, curling its head to attend the user. When given a simple message (up to 50 words) for a single target, the statuette dives into the earth, burrowing its way towards the message's intended recipient at 2 miles per hour. A *statuette of the burrowing linnorm* can pass through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal. It always takes the shortest path to its target and can travel a distance of up to 10 miles. Once it reaches its target (or its limit of 10 miles) a *statuette of the burrowing linnorm* delivers its message and then reverts to inanimate form. The statuette can be used once per week. It has hardness 10, 10 hp, and AC 15 while animated.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *animate objects*, *sending*; **Cost** 5,000 gp





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## WORDS FROM MANY ROADS LANDS OF THE LINNORM KINGS

BY RUSSELL "SORICEL MINOI MOUSEFEET" ESTES

ART BY ELIZABETH LINDHAG

**T**here are a great many things both dead and golden buried beneath this frigid land. Faces peer through the ice, rotted hands clutch trinkets that damned them to a frozen hell, ice witches battle for dominance of frigid lands, mad men run wild devouring whatever they might catch, and citizens and adventures alike battle creatures from this world and beyond. Why then would one venture to this land? Because it is there, and, of course, for glory.

### NITHVEIL

You have eluded me  
For years  
Oh, City of the Moon.  
No matter  
Where I go,  
You seem  
Always  
To wane,  
And so I know my search is endless,  
And so I search in vain.

### A WAR LOST

Snow falls  
On a crown,  
Forgotten,  
With no brow  
To rest upon.  
The Ulfen people  
Look to the forest,  
For their king  
To emerge,  
With Fafnheir's head in hand,  
To unite  
And claim the eastern land.

### BLACK TARN

Greed is what tempted me,  
And brought me to this lake.  
What lies beneath  
Those blackened waters?  
Silver or gold?  
I will find it all,  
For I have traveled past  
The dragon's bone,  
In search of glory,  
In search of precious stone.

### KALVA

On this island  
Madness  
Takes control.  
Wretched beasts  
Howl upon the shore,  
Gluttonous men  
Thirst for more,  
The price for passage,  
It is steep indeed,  
They want no money,  
But flesh,  
They need. ☹



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# WEAL AND WOE: RUNNERS AND WRECKERS

BY LIZ "HEROSBACKPACK" SMITH

ART BY ASHTON SPERRY

While some like to stick to the roads and to ships for their journeys, others prefer to make their own routes, skimming over the winter snow on runners. Most of these independent sorts consider a team of dogs superior to horses for sled work, as dogs are both better suited to the cold and require the owner to carry less food with them. Sled dogs are trained in the heavy labor general purpose and commonly run in teams of 2–6 dogs. Each dog in the team has its own particular purpose, from the wheel dogs taking the strain immediately in front of the sled to the lead dogs skilled in finding routes and spotting danger.

Two characters who prefer runners to roads are Brangita Stormeyes and Wolfstan "Icetongue" Torrson, each of whom owns their own sled and dog team. The number of accidents among the sled owners has seen a sharp increase. Although both Brangita and Wolfstan are aware of the risks, they both continue to travel for their own reasons.

## WEAL: BRANGITA STORMEYES, EXPRESS DELIVERY

Brangita wanted more from life than to marry and take over her dwarven family's jewelry business, so she ran away in a fit of temper and has never looked back. The only aspect of her previous life that she kept was to name all the dogs in her dog team after gemstones, becoming especially close to the lead dog she calls Jet. With her sled team, she weaves her way through towns and villages, never entirely predictable and never staying around long enough to be tied down by anything, or for her family to find her and bring her back.

Frostbitten and fiery-tempered, with dozens of thin braids in her mousy hair—one for every Linnorm Kingdoms circuit she has made—Brangita earned a reputation for reliability, trader contacts in most of the land based cities, and a niche for transporting small valuable packages to out-of-the-way places.



After one bad experience, she also learned never to travel without some source of emergency fire, preferably one that doesn't need working hands to start.

### Hooks:

- Adventurers may be referred to Brangita to order or collect magic items.
- The PCs may be recruited as on-the-spot judges for a sled race or insult match between Brangita and one or more of the townspeople.
- Brangita may request that the PCs investigate the sudden rise in dog sled accidents, having barely avoided some herself.

## BRANGITA STORMEYES

CR 5

XP 1,600

Dwarf ranger 6

N Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+7 armor, -1 Dex) (+4 dodge vs. giants)

**hp** 51 (6d10+18)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** mwk urgrosh +7/+7/+2/+2  
(1d8+2/1d6+2/1d8+2/1d6+2/×3)

**Ranged** cold iron light hammer +6 (1d4+1) or silver light hammer +6 (1d4)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (humanoid (human) +4, animals +2), favored terrain (cold +2)

**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st—*endure elements, resist energy*

### TACTICS

**During Combat** Brangita sets her back against something and waits for her opponents to come to her, often calling taunts or jeering in an attempt to make them angry. She sets her urgrosh against any initial charge and then uses both ends of the urgrosh to attack anyone within reach.  
**Morale** Brangita is hot-tempered but not stupid. If reduced to below 16 hit points, she surrenders.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 8, **Con** 16, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Double Slice, Endurance, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Quick Draw, Two Weapon Fighting

**Skills** Climb +7, Handle Animal +8, Heal +11, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +11, Profession (courier) +7, Survival +11 (+14 to follow tracks), Swim +7

**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Skald  
**SQ** hunter's bond (companion), track +3, wild empathy +5

**Combat Gear** alchemist's fire, *oils of magic weapon* (2), *potions of cure light wounds* (2), thunderstones (3)

**Other Gear** +1 *breastplate*, masterwork dwarven urgrosh, cold iron light hammer, alchemical silver light hammer, *cloak of*



*resistance* +1, sled and dog team (5 dogs + her animal companion Jet), wooden holy symbols (Erastil and Desna), spell component pouch, cold weather outfit, healer's kit, climber's kit, 50 ft. silk rope, tindertwigs (5), 100 gp worth of trail gear

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Boon** Once friendly with the PCs, Brangita can provide access to her web of contacts allowing the PCs a one-time opportunity to order a magic item as if the settlement they were in was one size larger.

### WOE: WOLFSTAN TORRSON, SABOTEUR

Smooth as ice and twice as slippery, Wolfstan attempts to befriend everyone he meets, cultivating a charming manner and a cheerful mask that rarely slips. Behind the mask, he is calculating and coldhearted. Wolfstan caused the increase in accidents, sabotaging sleds and routes. He salts river ice to create a weak layer, spikes trails so that dogs damage their paws, cuts harnesses part-way through, all part of a plan to set himself up as a kind and compassionate rescuer. That, he is certain, will in turn give him all the status of a hero and allow him to live the life he wants. Wolfstan has not yet managed to sabotage Brangita due to her erratic schedule. Unfortunate for him, as he wants to be sure he is on hand to "rescue" her when it all goes wrong.

In his scheming, Wolfstan "rescued" four drivers without otherwise persuading them of his friendliness, and allowed two major rivals to drown before stepping up to find their sleds and claim the contents as salvage.

Wolfstan does his best to stand out and keep up heroic appearances. A brightly enamelled brooch fastens his scarlet cloak and his working furs are encircled by a belt of carved horn plaques.

#### Hooks:

- Adventurers may discover the scene of an accident moments before Wolfstan, who arrives displeased to find rivals for his fame as a rescuer.
- The PCs may be assigned to guard a particularly valuable cargo that Wolfstan is transporting, with orders to prevent him from getting lost this time.
- Wolfstan may hire the PCs as decoys that he can later blame for the sabotage, sending them on innocent tasks that keep them out of the his way and rousing suspicion behind their backs.

### WOLFSTAN "ICETONGUE" TORRSON CR 5

XP 1,600

Human bard 6

CN Medium humanoid

**Init** +6; **Senses** Perception +8

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 deflection, +1 shield)

**hp** 30 (6d8+3)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** morningstar +5 (1d8+1) or dagger +5 (1d4/19-20)

**Ranged** +1 *shortbow* +7 (1d6+1/x3)

**Special Attacks** bardic performance 18 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 17], inspire competence +2, inspire courage +2, suggestion [DC 17])

**Bard Spells Known** (CL 6th; concentration +10)

2nd (4/day)—*detect thoughts* (DC 16), *glitterdust* (DC 16), *misdirection* (DC 15), *tongues*

1st (5/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *grease* (DC 15), *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *know direction*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *summon instrument*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Wolfstan drinks his potion of *shield of faith*

**During Combat** Wolfstan opens with *grease* aimed to catch as many opponents as possible. He follows up with *glitterdust* at any obvious mages and then begins an inspire courage performance and unslings his bow. He tries to stay at range as long as possible but changes to his morningstar if he can't get away.

**Morale** For all his claims of being a hero, Wolfstan is a coward at heart. If reduced to half his hit points or below, he tries to flee, using his tanglefoot bags to slow pursuit.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 18

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

**Skills** Bluff +13, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +5, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +8, Perform (oratory) +13, Perform (percussion) +15, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +8

**Languages** Common, Skald

**SQ** bardic knowledge +3, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (oratory, percussion)

**Combat Gear** alchemist's fire (2), *potion of shield of faith*, *scroll of delay poison*, tanglefoot bags (2)

**Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, buckler, +1 *shortbow* with 20 arrows, morningstar, dagger, masterwork drum, everburning torch, cold weather outfit, sled and dog team (4 riding dogs), thieves' tools, tindertwigs (5), 50 gp worth of trail gear

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Drawback** Once acquainted with the PCs, Wolfstan chooses them as the next target of his sabotage and potential "rescue".





# OF CHANCE AND SKILL: LINNORM BONES

BY DAIN "ZYPHRYX" NIELSEN

ART BY DAVE MALLON

**L**innorm Bones is a dice game popular in mead halls throughout the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, especially during the winter months when people find more time on their hands than good sense. The game requires players to gauge their odds as they play, for each round at hand and the match as a whole.

## HOW TO PLAY

Each player has five six sided dice and a cup. One die is off color from the others and is referred to as "the Linnorm's Head". When the match begins, all players roll their Linnorm's Head; this is "the Taking of the Heads". The highest die dictates the number of rounds for the match. All ties for the highest die roll are added together to give the total length. It is not uncommon in larger matches for a groan to be heard throughout the mead hall when an exceptionally long match is rolled as it often ends with all but one player leaving without a coin in their purse.

Play begins with each player placing the pre-determined ante into the Pot, followed by rolling and covering their dice. The player who rolled the lowest during the Taking of the Heads begins the wagers. If there was a tie for the lowest roll, those members wager between themselves, beginning with the youngest player, until there is only one wager remaining.

Regular wagering then progresses clockwise. A player may match or raise another's wager, check if there is no wager, or drop from the round. When the wager makes it around the players without a raise, the dice are revealed and the round's winner is determined.

Half the wagers go into the Pot and the winner or winners of the round get the other half. In the event of the tabled wagers not splitting evenly, the remaining amount goes into the Pot. The next round then begins with the previous round's winner starting the wagers. When a match is down to two players, all wagers feed the Pot until an end game scenario occurs.

If a player drops from a round, they score zero and must buy back their dice next round to continue, paying five times the regular ante. Otherwise they are out of the match.

## SCORING

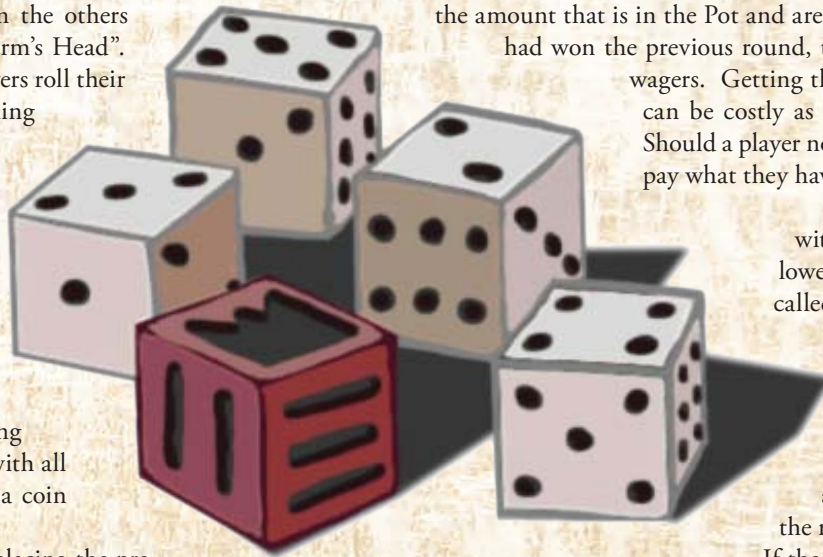
Scoring in Linnorm Bones is fairly straightforward. The total of the dice determine a player's round score, with a few special modifications and combinations, and the highest total wins. In the event of a tie, the player with the highest Linnorm Head wins. If the Linnorm Heads tie, then the players tie for that round. The sum of a player's scores for each round of the match is tracked as well.

If a number appears on two dice, its value is doubled. If it appears on three dice, it is tripled. If four dice, it is quadrupled. The other dice are added to this total. If all five dice match, the combination is called "the Winter Witch". A player unfortunate enough to roll this combination must reveal it immediately. They must then match the amount that is in the Pot and are out of the match. If the player

had won the previous round, the player to his left begins the wagers. Getting this combination late in a match can be costly as the Pot tends to grow quickly. Should a player not be able to match the Pot, they pay what they have.

If the five dice form a sequence, with the Linnorm Head as the lowest die in the sequence, it is called "the Lesser Wyrms". This combination is worth either 40 points (if the range is one through five) or 60 points (if the range is two through six). If another player ties in score for the round, the Lesser Wyrms wins.

If the five dice form a sequence, with the Linnorm Head as the highest die in the sequence, it is called "the Great Wyrms". This combination is worth either 75 points (if the sequence is one through five) or 100 points (if the sequence is two through six). If another player ties in score for the round, the Great Wyrms wins.



## Dice Results

Roll	Value	Name
Single die	Equal to die	
Doubles	Twice dice	
Triples	Thrice dice	
Quadruples	4 x total of dice	
Quintuples (Yahtzee!)	Removed from game, pay to double pot	White Witch
1-5 or 2-6, (Linnorm lowest)	40 or 60	Lesser Wyrms*
1-5 or 2-6, (Linnorm highest)	75 or 100	Great Wyrms*
4 6's, 5 on the Linnorm Head	101	High King*

\*: High King, Great & Lesser Wyrms beat all ties.



If the dice come up with four sixes and the Linnorm Head is a five, it is called “the High King”. This combination is worth 101 points and beats all other rolls, even if tied.

## WINNING THE MATCH

Play continues until one of three scenarios plays out:

- Only one player remains (all other players removed from play by rolling the Winter Witch or dropping and not buying back their dice).
- One player rolls the High King the same round another rolls the Great Wyrn.
- The round limit is reached with the last round played.

When only one player remains, they receive the pot.

When a player rolls the High King in the same round another player rolls the Great Wyrn, play ends and the High King takes the pot.

If more than one player remains after the last round, the winner is determined by the sum of their scores from all rounds. In the event of ties, special combinations are taken into account, with the High King beating a total score without the High King, the Great Wyrn beating any combination without the High King or the Great Wyrn, etc. If players are still tied, the pot is split among those with the highest score.

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Larsden, Ulric, Tomlin and Gunther sit down for a game. They roll their Linnorm Heads, resulting in 1, 2, 3, and 1, respectively. As there was no tie for the high roll, the match will last for 3 rounds. Had Ulric rolled a 3, the match would last for 6 rounds.

Each player places 1gp ante into the Pot, bringing its total to 4 gp. The dice are rolled, hidden beneath their cups, and the players check their dice. Since there was a tie for lowest die in the Taking of the Heads, Larsden and Gunther begin the match by wagering against each other beginning with the youngest player.

Larsden bids 1 gp, Gunther counters with 2 gp. Larsden decides not to raise and the wagering begins for the table. Larsden follows Gunther in play and throws in another 1 gp to match the current wager. Both Ulric and Tomlin match the 2 gp wager and the dice are revealed.

**Larsden reveals** 1, 3, 3, 4 (LH), 5 ... 22 points  $(1+4+5+2*(3+3))$ .

**Ulric reveals** 2, 2, 2 (LH), 4, 6 ... 28 points  $(4+6+3*(2+2+2))$ .

**Tomlin reveals** 1, 2, 3, 6, 6(LH) ... 30 points  $(1+2+3+2*(6+6))$ .

**Gunther reveals** 1, 3(LH), 5, 5, 6 ... 30 points  $(1+3+6+2*(5+5))$ .

As Tomlin’s Linnorm’s Head is higher than Gunther’s, Tomlin wins the round and takes 4 gp from the table and the other 4 gp are placed into the Pot, bringing the Pot up to 8 gp.

The second round begins with all the players putting another 1 gp ante into the Pot, raising the Pot to 12 gp, and rolling their dice.

When the players look at their dice, Tomlin finds he has rolled 2, 2, 2, 2, 2; a Winter Witch. He reveals his dice immediately and puts 12 gp into the Pot, bringing it up to 24 gp, and is out of the match.

As Tomlin had won the previous round, Ulric, who was on his left, begins the wagers at 8 gp. Gunther matches and Larsden drops from the round.

The remaining players reveal their dice.

**Ulric reveals** 1 (LH), 2, 3, 4, 5 ... 40 points (Lesser Wyrn).

**Gunther reveals** 2, 2, 5 (LH), 6, 6 ... 37 points  $(5+2*(2+2)+2*(6+6))$ .

Ulric wins, takes 8 gp from the table and deposits 8

gp into the Pot, bringing it up to 32 gp.

The third and final round begins with Ulric and Gunther putting 1 gp into the Pot while Larsden puts in 5 gp to rebuy his dice, bringing the Pot up to 39 gp.

After the roll, Ulric begins the wagers at 5 gp. Gunther matches and Larsden raises to 20 gp. Both Ulric and Gunther match.

**Larsden reveals** 3, 3, 3, 3, 6 (LH) ... 54 points  $(6+4*(3+3+3+3))$ .

**Ulric reveals** 2, 3 (LH), 3, 5, 5 ... 34 points  $(2+2*(3+3)+2*(5+5))$ .

**Gunther reveals** 3, 3, 3, 4 (LH), 4 ... 43 points  $(3*(3+3+3)+2*(4+4))$ .

Larsden wins, collecting 30 gp with the remaining 30 gp going into the Pot, bringing it up to 69 gp.

As the last round of the match, the combined scores for the three remaining players are tallied, resulting in 76 points for Larsden, 102 points for Ulric and 110 points for Gunther.

Gunther walks away from the table as the winner of the match even though he never won a single round. ☹

FAN ART:  
AARON FILIPOWICH

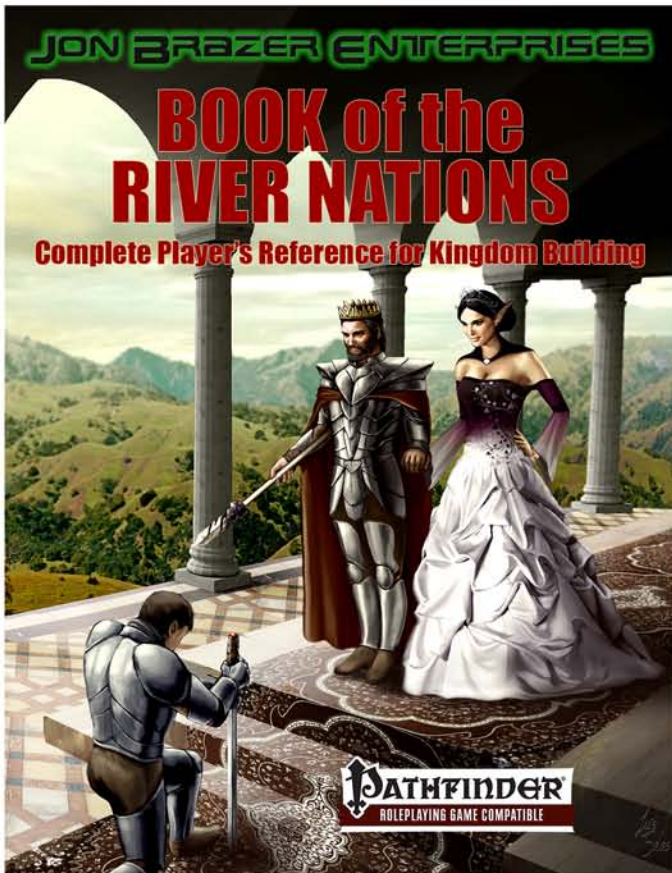




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# JON BRAZER ENTERPRISES



# OSTOG'S SONG

BY ROBERT "MALIKJOKER" GRESHAM

ART BY LIZ COURTS

Ostog Kvigsson moved slowly through the knee-high snow dragging a captured reindeer behind him. Tracking and catching the creature had been a chore, but one well worth it. The beast had tall, proud antlers, strong muscles, and a long, thick brown coat. The meat and blood whiskey it would provide would feed and render drunk half of Ostog's clan. Its antlers would be ground into powdered aphrodisiac and sold to southern traders back home in Trollheim. The gold would buy many new weapons. The Ulfen hunter beamed proudly at the thought.

As if reading his mind, the reindeer brayed in protest, its moan echoing across the snowy hillside. It stopped in its tracks, refusing to continue. Ostog pulled hard on the tether, but the animal wouldn't budge.

"Come now, stubborn beast," Ostog shouted, giving the leash his most forceful yank. The reindeer's head snapped to attention and it let out another echoing groan. Reluctantly, it resumed following the Ulfen.

The wind picked up and with it a light snow began to fall. The fine flakes feathered slowly downward, powdering Ostog's dark wolf furs where they landed. A chill accompanied the snow, stabbing through his clothes like tiny needles of ice. Ostog pulled the furs tighter about his body, and tugged urgently on the leash hoping to urge the reindeer to speed up.

A faint, feminine voice in the wind caused Ostog to stop dead in his tracks. Instinctively he drew his great club from the leather sling on his back and held it at the ready. He scanned the snowy hillside, holding his breath. The breeze whistled through the trees scattering fresh snow over old drifts. Close by, a river thundered. Gradually, Ostog could make out laughter in the wind as well. The giggles turned into a joyous song, the delicate voice carrying a sense of playfulness that stirred a strange feeling in

Ostog. He tried to pinpoint the source of the sound, thinking that it came from the west, away from the snow-covered road. He knew he shouldn't leave the road, but his curiosity, and the strange feeling in his stomach, got the better of him. Ostog turned west and began trudging through the snow, hiking towards the sound.

The hills grew larger and the snow began falling heavily, obscuring Ostog's vision in a shower of white. Ostog pulled the reindeer's leash in vain, but the beast would not follow him any further into the deep snow. The animal used its great strength to turn around, forcing Ostog back down the hill. The reindeer's urgency struck Ostog as strange, and he wondered if something had spooked it. He shook his head. If anything, he felt the opposite. He walked back down the hill and tied its leash in a thick knot around the trunk of a skeletal tree.

"Stay," Ostog said. He patted the beast's neck, then turned back to the mounds and began hiking up the deep snow.

The cold wind froze snowflakes into Ostog's full yellow beard and against the exposed parts of his face. By the time he reached the crest of the hill he resembled a child's snowman. Shaking the ice from his face, Ostog surveyed the landscape on the other side of the slope.

Two hundred yards away from the snow capped mound, the Rimeflow River ran furiously westward toward the Steaming Sea. Thin, leafless trees stood scattered before the riverbank like watchful guards. A larger, more robust tree appeared to hold court at the very edge of the embankment. Looking for the source of the song, Ostog

saw a woman, with porcelain white skin, sitting on one of the branches in the larger tree. She sang in a tongue that Ostog couldn't recognize, but he didn't need to understand her words to know how beautiful they were. As she sang she combed an azure colored shell through her wet golden hair. The enchanting sound danced on the wind and into Ostog's heart.

He stood on the hill for a while listening to the song. It intoxicated him more than the most potent blood whiskey he'd ever had. In all of Ostog's life, he had never heard anything so beautiful, so full of innocence. In his hunter's heart, he never imagined that he could be moved by any woman's song in such a way. He had to get closer and hear more clearly.

Ostog began descending the hill, moving carefully to avoid tumbling into the snow. As he neared the woman her song quickened his heart and twisted his stomach into a nervous knot. Feeling like a blushing boy around his first maiden, Ostog began charging down the hill in his desire to be closer. Ahead of him

the lithe, milk-white woman continued her song, blissfully unaware of the Ulfen man. Ostog reached the base of the mound and broke into a full run, his feet twisting awkwardly beneath him in the hindering snow. He had cleared half of the distance to the river when his boot caught on a buried root tangle and he crashed hard, headfirst into





the snow. Even half buried, he could still hear the angelic song of the golden-haired woman and it pulled at his heart, urging him on.

Determined, Ostog struggled back to his feet. As he looked to the woman in the tree, he heard a pause in the song and saw that she noticed him. She smiled sweetly at Ostog and leapt down from her tree branch, landing softly in the snow. She began to dance, her arm movements mimicking a graceful bird in flight and matching the highs and lows of her voice. As she twirled, her golden hair fanned out around her like a sunflower. The woman's dance stirred a longing inside Ostog that he hadn't known even existed. He moved as fast as he could toward the woman, eager to embrace and possess her.

"Fair maiden, your song lightens my heart and lifts my soul," Ostog shouted. "How have you come to be out in this empty place?"

The woman danced closer to the river's edge causing Ostog's heart to leap in alarm. He pushed harder to reach her, terrified that she would lose her footing. Slowly she moved into the river, the icy waters lapping against her ankles. Aghast, Ostog began waving his arms to get her attention. The woman didn't notice. She took another step in, unfazed as the water licked at her calves. Her song grew louder, more joyous, and that joy filled Ostog, soothing away his fear.

The Ulfen reached the large tree but the woman retreated deeper into the Rimeflow. She stared at him with eyes of green flame, a gentle laugh joining her song. Ostog wanted to lose himself in those eyes and listen to her singing for the rest of his days.

"My lady, the water, it's dangerously cold," Ostog said, finally reaching the shore. "Please, swim over to me."

Giggling, she backed further into the depths, the waters reaching her chest. Her golden hair floated on the surface, splayed out like rays from the sun. Behind her the river moved much more rapidly, white water frothing in the current.

Ostog stepped into the river, the icy waters clamping around his feet like steel bear traps. Pain shot up his legs with blinding intensity. The woman continued to sing and Ostog found himself, against his better judgment, wading deeper into the freezing cold water.

"Tell me your name, my love," the woman sang. Only her head remained above the surface of the river.

"Ostog, son of Kvigg," he replied through chattering teeth. Desire overwhelmed him. He wanted nothing more than to sweep her up in his arms and never let her go. He waded in deeper, up to his knees. The icy pain flooded his whole body now and his fingertips tingled as sensation abandoned them.

"Ostog my love, come to me, and stay with me forever."

Ostog continued forward, his body nearly completely numb from hypothermia.

"It...it is...too cold," he said, powerless to turn back. He reached the woman, his own head barely above hers.

"Kiss me," she said, the green flames burning fiercely in their sockets. "My love will warm you and protect you from the cold. Kiss me."

Ostog couldn't feel his body and he couldn't find the strength to pull away. He knew that unless he left the river that very instant, he would never leave. He tried to speak, to tell the woman this, but his teeth clacked so hard against each other he could not form words.

The golden haired woman saw this and smiled sympathetically. She embraced Ostog and kissed him, filling him with comforting warmth. He no longer noticed the cold. Wrapping his arms around her, he kissed her back, overjoyed to reciprocate her tender love. He forgot all thoughts of leaving the freezing water. Lost in their passion the pair slipped beneath the surface, disappearing into the icy river. ☹

# The Faerie Ring™

*A darkness is coming.  
Mab will soon be here...*

**PATHFINDER**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

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# HERO'S HOARD: BAG OF HUNGEROUS BONES

BY A. MORGAINÉ

"LOST AND LOVING IT" NEWIS-EDWARDS

ART BY CARLOS TORREBLANCA

And so it was that the old Jarl Gunnar Axe-biter had two sons. As is often the way of these things, each was as different from the other as Night from Day and, while one was strong and brave, the other was known to be a weakling and a coward.

At last the time came for the Jarl to begin his final journey accompanying his king to the Valenhall and it seemed certain who would hold the support of his father's warriors and claim his father's household.

When the Jarl's younger son, his craven son, his shameful son, demanded that he be given the right to prove himself above his brother, those gathered about turned their faces from him.

Some claimed that if he would see himself Jarl then nothing should stop him from proving himself worthy to be king. They swore that they would see him hunt the Linnorm, but his brother was as wise as he was worthy and would not see him slain over a matter such as this.

It was so decided that each would take to his horse the next dawn and go from that place. They would each travel for three days and three nights, seeking the greatest tribute to the memory of their father's rule.

He who returned with the finest prize would be the truest son and heir.

The strong son left at the first light of the morning, his axe and shield in hand, but it was close to noon when his brother stirred. Thinking to follow the elder, who would surely travel to the richest hunting grounds, the Jarl's second son rode out after the tracks in the snow.

Alas, Winter is a cruel thing and no friend of man. No sooner had he departed than a great storm came down.

In the time it takes to skin a hare he was lost.

For a long while he wandered without sign of direction or of rescue,

his hair and beard growing thick with ice.

At last, as all hope was leaving him, he came upon a hunting lodge out there in the wilds. Forcing open the door, his joy to find a fire burning bright and warm within turned to horror as he saw in its light that the hut was fashioned all from bones. A woman sat by the fire and, while she smiled upon him kindly, he knew her for the witch she must be and would draw no nearer—even with axe in hand.

She asked him how his hunt fared. She told him that his brother had passed by earlier, having tracked and slain two great bears—their skulls and pelts to bring home for his father's seat.

All in a rage he turned to depart, keen to meet his brother's advantage, but hesitated as she called out to him again. The woman spoke that she might aid him and, if he wished it so, would give him means to victory. Reaching down beside herself, she drew out an old leather *taska*-pouch and bade him reach deep into it, that he might draw out what awaited him.

Now it was that as well as a coward this man was also a fool and, eager as he was to succeed at any cost, he did as he was instructed.

The pain was great.

As he snatched his hand back he saw that something within had claimed the two outer fingers. All that remained had been gnawed down to two nubs of gristle, glistening and useless.

With a word, the woman upended the bag before him and from deep inside tumbled out the bones of four men, each red and slick as a new-born.

Even as he watched, these Bone Men pulled themselves to their feet to stand ready and waiting before him.

She asked of him if this was not wonder enough for any man.

While any true Son of the North would have spat upon her foul magic and slain her on the spot, so great was this brother's want for victory that he would do nothing but accept her gift.

He remained with her that night.

What he offered in return no man may know, but when he left the following morning he had learned each and every secret of the cursed device.

It was proudly that he approached his father's hall that final day, drawn along in a great sleigh of bones with all that was left of him covered over in soft winter furs.

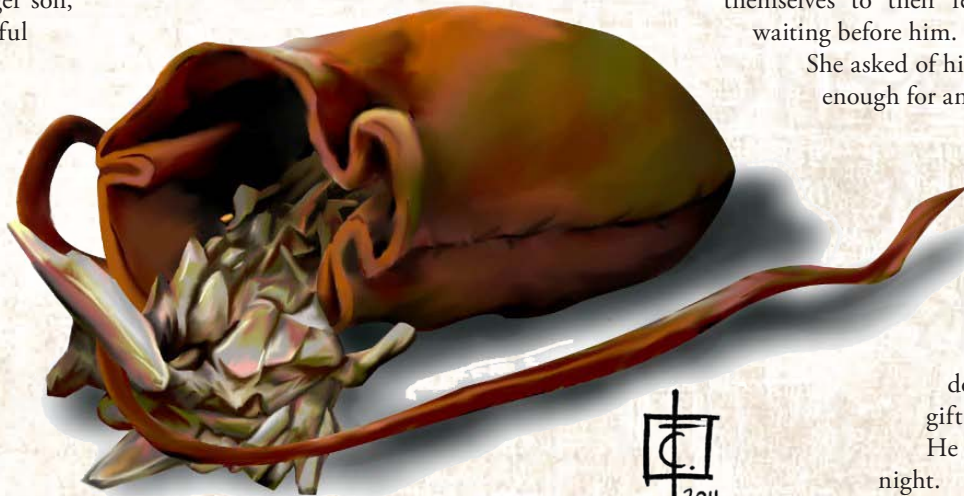
Two score of the dead marched from his side to tap upon the door with their long, long fingers.

As the doors opened to let him in, he stepped down from his seat and demanded that all must now accept him as rightful heir.

He asked to see what little trinkets his brother could bring out to match an undying raiding party and claimed that, with these new followers at his command, he would bring pride to his family and raise up the Hall as something all men must look upon in fear and wonder.

Shamed to see his father's memory tainted by such vileness, the old Jarl's first son, his brave son, his loyal son, led his warriors forward with blades drawn to reclaim his honor.

In the end though what man may stand against that which cannot





be slain?

As the years passed, the Jarl's second son used the bones of his brother and all those who had dwelled beside him to repair what of his domain had need of it.

Little by little, honest wood and stone was replaced by the remains of the fallen, the walls rising higher and higher.

The forge was allowed to grow cold, the drinking hall became silent and soon enough not even a rat would suffer to dwell in that hateful place.

From time to time, the new Jarl would dispatch his Bone Men to the raiding, though he never had the want for it himself, being instead content to sit alone in the High Seat of his Hall of emptiness and rot. Master at last.

Bones now, having fed his flesh to the Bag for want of more and more unending warriors, it is likely that he remains there to this day.

He will continue to hold his home until the End of Days.

Until the Kingdoms fall.

Until only his hands remain."

*Saga of the Svelta*, as relayed by Valdis Ormstunga.

### BAG OF HUNGEROUS BONES

**Aura** moderate necromancy and conjuration; **CL** 8

**Slot** —; **Cost** 25,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs

#### DESCRIPTION

A tattered leather pouch the size of a haversack, this bag seems always to be filled to the brim with gnawed, bloody bones.

Once per day, the *bag of hungry bones* can be upended to produce one of three things. Depending on the command word uttered, the bones spilling out arrange themselves

into one of the following: four bloody human skeletons under the control of the bag's owner (as *animate dead*); a hut capable of housing up to eight medium creatures (as *secure shelter*); a sleigh with seating for six medium creatures (as *phantom chariot*. *Ultimate Combat* page 239).

Skeletons produced by a *bag of hungry bones* emerge tattered and miss-matched, with parts clearly taken from a variety of humanoid races. Their fingers are always overlong and often possess extra joints.

Accommodation provided by a *bag of hungry bones* will inevitably be drafty, filled with whispers and reeking like a charnel house.

A sleigh created by a *bag of hungry bones* is capable of eight hours of travel before the rigors of continued movement shake it to pieces entirely. While there are no creatures visibly drawing the sleigh, the faint sound of skittering claws can be heard with a moderate Perception check (DC 20).

Activating a *bag of hungry bones* is a full-round action.

Anyone reaching into a *bag of hungry bones* must make a DC 15 Reflex save or lose 1d2 fingers. Each living creature's finger consumed by the *bag of hungry bones* grants an additional use of the bag's powers for that day. A creature that loses more than half of its fingers on one hand suffers the effects of a called shot to the hand (see Called Shots in *Ultimate Combat*). Only a *regenerate* or *limited wish* spell can grow these fingers back.


#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *animate dead*, *phantom chariot*, *secure shelter*; **Cost** 12,500 gp ☉

FAN ART:  
STEPHEN McANDREWS







## SPOOKS AND OTHER SHADY CHARACTERS OF KARLSGARD

BY KARL J. "KAJENASE" HAGLUND

ART BY TODD WESTCOT

In a city as large as Karlsgard, it is only natural that characters of a less than virtuous nature will gather, as it is easier for them to hide their clandestine deals amongst the throng of city people than it would be to do so out on the sparsely populated (and sometimes dangerous) countryside of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. This article is a listing of some of them.

**Tryggvi Torkelsson** (CE human rogue [chameleon]UC 3) owns a cunny warren in the shadier part of the Fire Quarter, which also serves as the home and resting place for him and his team of juvenile cutpurses and beggar boys (all rogues or commoners 1, with some of the cutpurses using the Rogue archetype of that name) working for him throughout the city. Tryggvi is a bully, quick to use violence against any underlings who have displeased him in some way, yet equally quick to back out of a fight against someone whom he perceives to be stronger than him. Since his band of youngsters operates across the city, in a pinch they could be used as an information gathering network as long as Tryggvi is well paid for their troubles. The boys and girls working for him feel little loyalty towards Tryggvi, and would give up any knowledge they have about him without prompting if caught, in the same way, none of them will step in to defend him in case he's attacked.

**The Scarlet Petals:** These four wizards (**Gvino Derbasa** [CN human wizard 4], **Horsi Bulitti** [CG human enchanter 5], **Arabasta Derbasa** [CN halfling wizard 2, and **Lykkova** [NG halfling diviner 6] originally hail from the Chelaxian city of Corentyn, but left that city in

a hurry when the local authorities discovered they were worshipers of Milani. Escaping only because of Lykkova's divinations, they boarded the first ship they could find that had a captain willing to take on passengers, and ended up in Karlsgard. They have now spent six years in the city and have managed to build up a small network of agents among the traders (or, rather, the sailors and bodyguards working for those traders) travelling to and from Cheliax that carry messages between them and other presumptive rebels throughout Cheliax. Their feelings toward their new home is mixed, the youngest among them, Arabasta, has found herself feeling quite at home, even if the winters are very cold, and is often seen on the arm of a new Ulfen suitor as she continues her investigation of the city's entertainments. The three older members of the cell, though, find Karlsgard to be a dreary place and are thinking about relocating to Magnimar or Riddleport, although it's unlikely that Gvino would leave his younger sister on her own.

**"Pet" Gwillem** (CG halfling rogue 4) lives in the Bone Quarter from where he runs an arm of the Bellflower Network. He and the halflings working with him specialise in spiring slaves from the holds of Chelaxian and Nidalese ships visiting Karlsgard. They also provide transport to other parts of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings or Varisia, especially Kaer Maga. He might be willing to help out

adventurers in other situations if he takes a liking to them, and is an excellent contact for someone who wishes to have something (or someone) smuggled in or out of the city, or who needs an "in" with Karlsgard's halfling community. His old friend and mentor, "Smiling" Göran, an Ulfen sea-captain, went missing on a trading journey to Rahadom a few years back. Indebted to Göran, who tirelessly worked with the Bellflowers to hide escaped halfling slaves among his non-living cargo, Gwillem might even be willing to join PCs in need of a skilled trapper should they manage to obtain information about his whereabouts.

**Egil Threefingers** (N human rogue [spy]APG 3) is the chief clerk of Sveinn Blood-Eagle's city watch, but he also, (unbeknownst to his king) serves as spymaster in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings for the House of Thrune. Egil has no fondness for devils or the ideals espoused by the diabolists of Cheliax, but he does love Egil and has a great fondness for

gold coins clinking in his purse. He has nine or ten agents throughout the Linnorm lands, as well as one or two as far away as Algidheart and Whitethrone in Irrisen. The most important of these is **Toragils Sörensson**, a high-ranking member of Castellan Freyr Darkwine's court in Trollheim. ☹





# HERO'S HOARD: FALSE DRAUPNIR

BY NICHOLAS "LAVACHILD" MILASICH

ART BY CARLOS TORREBLANCA

Sagas are sung of Henrick Crowsfoot, who found an armband crafted of the finest gold in the lair of a terrible multi-headed troll. Taking it as his own, he discovered the next morning that there were two identical armbands where once there had been only one. The next morning, and the morning after, he found yet more armbands, and so he paid bride price for the princess of a tribe who dwelt nearby. Henrick's new father-in-law, believing himself to be wealthy beyond his wildest dreams, was horrified to discover on the ninth day that the golden bracelets melted away into morning dew. Furious with Henrick, he named the remaining bracelet the False Draupnir and demanded justice before the council. Too proud to admit his foolishness, Henrick refused to pay, although by now he had learned firsthand of the draupnir's curse. Harsh words were spoken and the killing began. Both sides refused payment of wergild, and the strife became open war. When the slaughter was finally done, Henrick's entire line was gone and the neighboring tribe, weakened, fell to slavers and their lands too became empty.

## FALSE DRAUPNIR

**Aura** faint conjuration; **CL** 7th (15th)

**Slot** — ; **Weight** —

### DESCRIPTION

This armband appears to be made of fine gold and depicts a coursing hound. It is typical of Linnorm King treasure in that it is meant to be worn by warriors and lords. The armband appears to have a value of about 50 gp before its magical properties are discovered. Unfortunately, this magic is of a dark nature that has turned friend against friend and caused countless feuds among the people of the northlands.

The *false draupnir* appears at first to be a common armband, but upon identification appears to have the beneficial power of replicating itself nightly, so that when morning comes, two

rings are found where one once was. The higher caster level of the two represents the actual difficulty level of learning the true nature of the item's powers. For indeed, the draupnir does create copies of itself, making men believe themselves rich beyond their wildest dreams, but these copies, while not illusions, melt away into morning dew on the ninth morning after their creation.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Magic Items** Any magic bracer

### ADVENTURE HOOKS

**Feud:** "Brands into their longhouses! We will not take wergild!"

The false draupnir has struck again, and the party finds itself hired, either to take vengeance on a rival, or discover who has "stolen" the lost gold.

**An Ill Treasure:** "What the Gods give, man should examine carefully."

Imagine the joy of a reaver or adventurer when the treasure they have found duplicates itself! Of course, the ill-tempered reaver smith, woods witch or local lord will be less than pleased when their payment melts into morning dew, to be sure. This is the north, and vengeance is certain.

**Payment lost:** "Easy come, easy go"

Paid in a cache of barbarian arm bands, the party opens up the bag to find several or all missing, only water within. What has happened? Who has cheated them?

**Delivering the cursed armband:** "Let us stir the pot, and see what floats to the surface."

As it turns out, certain grim, brutal gods of the north employ the *false draupnir* in order to spread strife and war among mortals, the better to pick strong souls for their heavenly army. Now, they find they need some fools to go and recover this item from wherever it has been lost. By "some fools", of course, they mean the PCs.

### OPTIONAL RULES

Feel free to lower the payoff and value of the draupnir for low level parties (15 gp is a lot per day at first level), and raise it for high level parties (Ruby eyes on the hound! Now each band is worth 100 gp or more.)

If it works for your game, perhaps the created armbands continue to exist until they are transferred to another's possession, so a foolish king can make a great horde, give it to a neighboring kingdom, and then *real* mayhem can occur.

Another option is to change how the ring operates, by not having the rings disappear on each night, nine days after its creation. In this build, if there is a group of armbands in one place, and one disappears, they *all* revert to morning dew. This can bring a larger "oomph" to the group than just finding one missing. In fact, when a cranky NPC finds all of the treasure gone, hilarity ensues!

Don't be afraid to fudge this one. If the plot needs the rings to disappear in 3 days, then that's how long it will take. If it requires the rings to stay for a month for maximum chaos, then that's how long it takes in your game world. ☉





# The Breaking of Forstor Nagar

A Pathfinder adventure for 4 8th levels PCs

## Dynamic Vision



AC(Touch, Flat)	19(9, 19)
CMD	7
Init	3
Hp	47/59+0
Speed	30
Fort,Ref,Will	10,4,14
Perception	10

## Initiative Tracking



Next	Round: 1
✓	Daffyd = 21
	Cadwin = 19
	Ignacia = 19
	Artisen = 7
	Soldier on Rhino 31 (Rhino Rider) = 6

## Initiative Tracking

## Automated Attacks, Spells, Saves and more

## Chat

Daffyd has received initiative.

Daffyd: **Daffyd full attacks!**

Attack 1

Daffyd attacks with +1 cold iron mace, rolling a 3, giving 11 to hit. If it hits the attack deals 10 points of damage.

Attack 2

Daffyd attacks with +1 cold iron mace, rolling a 20, giving 23 to hit.

**Critical Threat!**

To confirm the critical, Daffyd rolls a 13, giving a total of 16 to confirm. If the critical hit is confirmed then Daffyd deals 16 damage. If the critical fails it deals 8 damage.

**Daffyd**  
Male human NG cleric 8 of Lada  
Init +3; Senses Perception +10

### DEFENSES

AC 19 touch 9 flat-footed 19  
hp 59 (currently 47)  
Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +14

### OFFENSE

Speed 30  
Melee +1 cold iron mace +8/+3 (1d8+2)  
Spells (CL 8, +14 concentration)  
4th—*cure critical wounds, death ward, holy smite, imbue with spell ability*  
3rd—*cure serious wounds, dispel magic, magic vestment, protection from energy, searing light*  
2nd—*calm emotions, cures moderate wounds, remove paralysis, restoration, lesser, shield other, spiritual weapon*  
1st—*bless, comprehend languages, cure light wounds, cure light wounds, endure elements, obscuring mist, protection from evil*  
0—*create water, guidance, light, mending*

Domains: community, protection

### STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 13  
Base Atk +6; CMB +16; CMD 7

Feats Child of the Temp

Channel Improved Cl

Special Abilities Aura (Ex), Ausp of Pro

Calming Touch 18/Day/Con, Cha

17), Resistant Toxin (Su) 10

100-171, Immunity to Poison

## Live Stat Blocks

## PRD hyperlinks, player/GM views, online play, player handouts and much, much more



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# CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE

BY JEFF "SHADOWBORN" LEE

ART BY ASHTON SPERRY

**T**he horns of the watchtowers wake me before dawn. I rise from my bed, groan, and pull my fur cloak about me before stepping out into the cold. Others are awake, running to the south wall.

"Trolls!" The call echoes across the village.

I stride towards the south wall, my right knee aching from the chill. I have grown old. At the wall, the townfolk are ready; the defenses I designed are ready. Ignoring the pain in my knee, I climb to the top of the palisade, where men hurl stones down on the heads of our attackers. With my one good eye, I see a dozen of the great, tusked giants. Some have already scrambled into the dry moat below the village wall. Soon they will ascend the slope and attempt to climb the wall, or rend it asunder with their claws.

Our defenders know the plan. They will wait until half are in the moat to proceed. As more monsters descend, pots of oil—worth a quarter of the season's harvest profit—dash against the moat's bottom. Flaming brands follow, setting the moat awash with fire. The roar of flames and trolls nearly drown out the cheers of our warriors, as our attackers clamber back out of the trench, chased by the flaming arrows and javelins raining down upon them. The trolls fall back from the wall, rebuffed but not retreating. It is then I see the warrior riding for them.

He is a giant of a man, his horse equally grand. Standing in the stirrups he can almost look a troll in the eye. He bears a broad blade; arcane fire dancing along its edge. The warrior swings in a burning arc and severs an arm from the first troll in his path. His mount bulls past two more as his blade cleaves left and right, slicing and cooking troll flesh as he passes. Another cheer sounds from the wall. This is no mere man; but a force of nature. His horse rears, dancing a circle on its hind legs, turning in a flurry of hooves. Half the trolls lie upon the frozen ground before I break the spell, tearing my gaze away from this agent of destruction.

"You lot, come with me, half of you grab pikes,

the rest torches." I lead a score of our warriors to the gate, grabbing a long spear myself. Together we press the attack, charging the trolls while they are engaged with the mounted warrior. Our sudden arrival decides things. Three more trolls lie dead before the others decide to flee. They don't get far. The warrior gallops off in pursuit. I order our warriors to dispose of the bodies, and then move to greet our deliverer.

He dismounts as I approach. His horse must be eighteen hands high, and though I am not a small man, this warrior stands a full head taller. He is clad all in brown—leather and bearskin over steel mail—and his shield bears the visage of a great bear's head upon it in profile, painted in white, with the blue steel boss at the center as its eye. His hair, golden-red, falls in curling locks about his broad face. His beard is short. As we stand face to face, I note with jealousy that no gray hairs nest there. He extends his hand to clasp my forearm. His grip is like iron, his gaze even. Eyes the color of the sky before a storm take my measure.

"I am Halthor," he says. "You are the headman?"

"I am. Agnar Hrolfson, servant of Erastil. We owe you thanks."

Halthor smiles. Suspicious as I am, it looks more like the grin of a lolling wolf than a friend.

"A meal, a drink, and a warm bed are thanks enough," he says, patting his scabbard. "Eldrbrand is always glad of a chance to hew troll-flesh."



AD'11



So he was that Halthor. The magic blade was more famous than the warrior who bore it, but not by much. These were not the first trolls to meet defeat under that blade.

"Then be welcome in Breckholm, and receive our gratitude and hospitality." I motion toward the gates, and escort him in. Halthor gets ahead of me as I stop to tend to a young woman with a gash in her upper arm from a troll's claw. Touching the age-darkened wooden symbol hung about my neck, I murmur a brief prayer. The magics staunch the bleeding, close the torn flesh. I smile at her and then catch up to our guest. Just inside the gate a crowd of cheering folk surrounds him. With a glance and a gesture, I send a boy to take Halthor's mount to the stable. A few words in the right ears and preparations begin for a feast as our guest is conducted to the meeting hall. With Halthor occupied, I attend to business: ensuring the pits are covered again, oil and weapons restocked. I send runners to check on outlying farms and see that any further injuries are cared for. The sun is high by the time I see Halthor again.

I spend the feast in silence. Between the chatter of villagers, Halthor's boasting, and our fool bard retelling tales the warrior has already told, there is too much talk anyway. I tally the food expended in my head, confident our stores will hold through the winter despite the excess. I am too much into my cups. I do not know how long it is before I note the lessening of noise, the somber atmosphere that blankets the hall. Halthor is in the midst of a speech, and it is as I predicted.

"At sunrise I shall face the wyrm in its lair, slay the beast, take its head, and return as the next Linnorm King."

Silent faces gaze back at him from the hall. I stand as he finishes speaking, raise my goblet and break the silence myself. "Breckholm! Raise your cups and hail Halthor the Mighty. Trollslayer! Crownseeker! Hail!"

"Hail!" The call echoes through the hall. Halthor stands proud. I suggest he rest before his venture, offering the hospitality of my home and he agrees.

\* \* \*

We sit, sharing a drink by the fire. A horn of mead for him, but only water in my cup. I can feel his eyes tracing the scars that run from my

blind eye down my face, marring my beard before disappearing under my tunic.

"You bear the marks of a warrior," he says.

"I was much like you, long ago. I did not find the call of Erastil until after I made my home here. These scars mark my last fight and only defeat." His gaze looks east, toward the mountain invisible now in the dark. I nod.

"Yes, I faced Hällafang, the ice linnorm. I failed."

"Yet you live," he says, the question apparent in his face.

"She allowed me to live, to give testament to her might."

"Tell me," Halthor demands.

I shake my head. "You know her power. My tale will not deter you. You see the result. I can only thank Erastil that he led me here. I have a home and purpose once again."

Halthor nods, but does not relent.

"Tell me one thing. The tales of the second entrance, on the mountainside overlooking your village. It is there?"

"It is," I reply.

Halthor gives a wolfish smile. "Then I shall use it, and take the wyrm by surprise." His confidence is palpable. He drains the rest of his mead and stands. "I shall leave you to your rest, and see you in the morning."

I nod in reply, as he moves off to the bed prepared for him. I stare out the window towards the mountain as if I can see it, until sleep claims me.

I awake hours later to the jangle of mail. Halthor is dressing. The sky is gray with predawn light. We break fast together, and share a final hand-clasp at my door.

"Say a prayer to Old Deadeye for me."

"Erastil is not a god of war or glory. I pray that we all stay safe from the wyrm."

"As you say, priest. Farewell."

I watch him mount and ride through the gate from my hilltop vantage point, and then shut the door. I add a log to the fire, trying to drive the chill from my bones. Hanging on the wall above the mantle are the last remnants of my past: a steel shield, rent in twain, a broken sword, and a horn. I take down the latter, the remnant of a great bull, reinforced with a bronze cap and bands.

I move to the window, watching the sky go from gray to pink, the mountain crags gaining depth and definition. Halthor, now distant, comes into view. I sound a long blast. He wheels his horse about, and thinking the hail meant for him, he raises a hand in final farewell, then turns back to his quest.

Once the sun has risen, I take half the shield from the wall and turn it over. I have brushed and polished the inside to a mirror-like sheen. I hold it out the window, flashing a pre-agreed signal, repeating it at intervals to ensure it is seen. Now the linnorm is forewarned; she will be ready. Whoever wins, wyrm or warrior, I have fulfilled my oath and done my duty as protector and champion: Breckholm will remain untouched by the linnorm's ravages. ☹



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# MOOT, A FOLKTALE

BY KEVIN ANDREW MURPHY

ART BY DAVE MALLON

## Pathfinder Grand Lodge, Absalom

**Informant:** Scip-Hadni, Varni Rimesinger? (see notes)

**Location:** The Icemark steppes, Lands of the Linnorm Kings (Nithveil? The Inn of the Blue Pony?)

**Date:** ??? (When was this collected?)

**Pathfinder:** ??? (Who collected this?)

### Transcript:

This is a tale told by my grandmother, as told to her by a brownie servant in the Inn of the Blue Pony, a tiny house in the fairy city of Nithveil.

Once every generation or so—more often when it happens more often, less when it happens less—all the gremlins of Golarion gather for a Grand Moot. The wicked jinkins and the unlucky pugwumpis, the crafty grimolochins and the unspeakable psammeads, the vegxits who unfix the runners of sleds and the nuglubs who smother babes then place them back in their sleeping mother's arms, and many other gremlins beyond counting or countenancing, all gather together in the

First World.

There, so the brownie told my grandmother, the gremlins swap stories of misery sown, of chaos caused, and of lives ruined, or, to use the gremlins' own words, "made more interesting," for it must be remembered that gremlins are fey, and while they do not care in the slightest if anyone dies, they have little regard for a boring or inappropriate death. A nuglub who simply kills a victim earns no respect, but one who murders a person in singularly novel or poetic fashion or in such a way that all the survivors believe that another has done it? That is high art and fine craft. Indeed, more than one nuglub has risen to King of the Gremlins for orchestrating a single murder and then laying false blame that leads to a blood feud or even a war between nations.

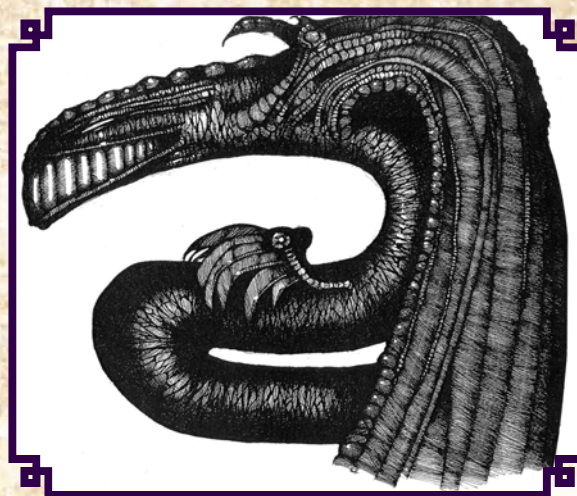
The brownie told her that many gremlins have been king or queen, sometimes for a season, sometimes for a century. The fey do not measure time as we do. Moreover, the gremlins choose not only their ruler, but also who is a gremlin. If other fey convince them of their novelty and ingenuity for mischief, of their talent for creating misery and consternation, then they may not be declared an honorary gremlin, but can win the gremlin's highest acclaim, being given the wyrdstone scepter, and declared king or queen, at least for as long as they continue to amuse their subjects.

Indeed, as the brownie confided in my grandmother, it is said that a human maid once found her way to the Gremlin Moot and spun her own tale of mischief, how she had conspired to ruin her sisters' marriage prospects, and so was elected Gremlin Queen herself.

Who this maid is or when this was the brownie did not know or was perhaps too afraid to say, but the Gremlin Queen must be keeping her subjects amused because it has been a while since the last Grand Moot....

**Grand Lodge notation:** *A transcript from an unnamed Pathfinder told by a named bard relating a tale told by his unnamed grandmother second-hand from an unnamed brownie in Nithveil, a city from the First World that manifests in random locations in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings? We cannot possibly include this in the official Pathfinder Chronicles. That said, it's intriguing enough to bear further investigation, and alarming as well. Grimolochins? Psammeads? The wyrdstone scepter?* 🗨️

FAN ART:  
CHRIS LEAPER





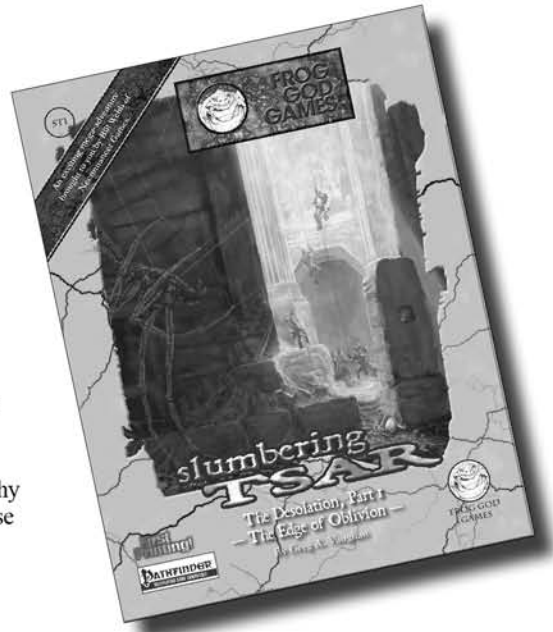
# slumbering TSAR

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# BESTIARY

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NICK "DEMIURGEI138" HEROLD, JEFF  
"SHADOWBORN" LEE, ROBERT LITTLE,  
KEVIN ANDREW MURPHY, AND  
ALEX "DAVIOT" PUTNAM

ART BY TYLER CLARK, CRYSTAL  
FRASIER, STEPHEN MCANDREWS,  
AND TODD WESTCOT

## BEASTS OF THE FROZEN WATERS

The Land of the Linnorm Kings is defined by water. Its Ulfen warriors travel and trade by way of the sea and its beaches and moors provide the game on which many families feed. Unfortunately for them, the Ulfen may find themselves hunted in return by the many strange creatures inhabiting these cold waterways.

### NYCAR

*This green serpentine creature has two clawed forelegs and a dragon-like head.*

#### NYCAR CR 4

XP 1,200

NE Medium dragon

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision  
60 ft., scent;  
Perception +7

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-  
footed 14 (+2 Dex,  
+4 natural)

**hp** 30 (4d12+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +6, **Will**  
+5

#### Defensive Qualities

ferocity; **DR** 5/  
magic

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., swim  
30 ft.

**Melee** bite +6 (1d8+2  
plus disease), 2  
claws +6 (1d4+2)

#### Spell-like

**Abilities** (CL 4th,  
concentration +5)  
Constant—*pass without  
trace*



#### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 5, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18 (cannot be tripped)

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** Climb +8, Perception +7, Stealth +11, Swim +16

**Languages** Draconic (cannot speak)

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** cold marshes

**Organization** solitary, pair or knot (3-8)

**Treasure** standard

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Disease (Ex)** *Dragon rot*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *onset* 1 hour; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Str and 1d3 Con; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution based.

Nycars are small, degenerate offshoots of dragon-kind that live in desolate moors and marshes. Some refer to them as "pseudo-linnorms", due to their similarly serpentine shapes. Nycars are only dimly intelligent, but savage and cruel in their behavior, and like nothing more than to stalk prey for hours before closing in for the kill. Their slow metabolism suits their formidable habitat, and a large meal can sustain a nycar for several months. Nycars collect treasure, as if aping their more intelligent cousins—the shinier the bauble, the better. The Linnorm King Opir Eightfingers keeps two nycars as guard-beasts, to which he feeds choice table-scraps and the occasional prisoner.

### POHTON

*Long and lean, this whale-like creature has a scaled hide like a fish and a powerful finned tail. Its huge jaws bristle with jagged teeth.*

#### POHTON CR 8

XP 4,800

N Huge magical beast (aquatic)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;  
Perception +10

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+1  
Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural, -2  
size)

**hp** 105 (10d10+50)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

**Resist** cold 10

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 10 ft., swim 80 ft.

**Melee** bite +15 (2d8+7  
plus 2d4 bleed plus  
grab/19-20), tail slap +10  
(1d8+3)

**Ranged** sea-spray  
+9 ranged touch (4d6  
nonlethal plus push)  
**Space** 15 ft.; Reach 10  
ft.

**Special Attacks** push  
(10 ft.), swallow whole  
(2d8+10 bludgeoning  
damage, AC 15, 10 hp)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 24, **Dex** 13, **Con** 20, **Int**  
8, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +19; **CMD**



**Feats** Dodge, Improved Critical (bite), Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack

**Skills** Perception +10, Swim +23

**SQ** amphibious

---

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** any ocean

**Organization** solitary, pair, pod (4-8)

**Treasure** none

---

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Sea-spray (Ex)** As a standard action, a pohton can spray a torrent of water at a single target within 60 ft. This is a ranged touch attack that deals 4d6 points of nonlethal damage and subjects the target to the pohton's push ability. The sea-spray puts out non-magical fires of Large size or smaller.

Pohtons are the bane of fisherman and sailors alike. These aggressive carnivores feed on almost anything that lives in the sea; mostly fish and seals, but they will tear apart even the largest whales if given a chance. Humans are no exception, and these predators will target boats, either tearing holes in their bows and sinking them or using their sea-spray to knock sailors into the water one by one. Due to this impact on shipping in waters inhabited by pohtons, White Estrid of the Linnorm Kings has offered a bounty of 1,500 gold pieces per pohton head.

Despite their voracity, pohtons are not evil and are in fact highly social creatures that travel in family groups and care for their young. They are simply not intelligent enough to distinguish human beings from all the other sorts of meat available to them.

## SEAL

*This tube-shaped beast has four flippers for limbs and a whiskered, dog-like head.*

---

**SEAL** **CR 1/2**

**XP** 200

**N** Medium animal

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision, Perception +5

---

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 13 (2d8+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

---

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 15 ft., swim 40 ft.

**Melee** bite +2 (1d4+1)

---

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 7

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13 (17 against trip)

**Feats** Endurance

**Skills** Perception +5, Swim +13

**SQ** hold breath

---

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** cold and temperate oceans

**Organization** solitary, pair, bob (3-6) or colony (20-80 plus 50% noncombatant young)

**Treasure** none

---

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Hold Breath (Ex)** A seal can hold its breath for a number of minutes equal to six times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

Seals, or pinnipeds, are common sea-mammals distantly related to bears. Unlike whales and dolphins, they have not lost the ability to move on land and indeed must return to the shoreline in order to mate and breed. It is on the beaches that they are most commonly hunted by the Ulfen, as adult seals yield meat and oil, and the fur of the pups is soft and warm. All seals are carnivorous, eating fish and squid—larger seals such as leopard seals and sea lions may supplement this diet with sea birds and even other seals.

Sea lions, related to seals, have more flexible flippers and are as such more mobile on land. A sea lion uses the statistics of a seal with the giant simple template and a land speed of 25 feet. Leopard seals are large predaceous seals that can pose a threat to humans in their waters. A leopard seal uses the statistics of a seal with the advanced and giant simple templates.

### Seal Animal Companions

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 15 ft., swim 40 ft.; **AC** +1 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, hold breath.

**4th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **AC** +3 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str +8, Dex -2, Con +4

## ELEPHANT SEAL

*This immense blubbery beast trundles forward on massive flippers, a floppy snout hanging over a tusked mau.*

---

**ELEPHANT SEAL** **CR 6**

**XP** 2,400

**N** Huge animal

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +7

---

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 12, touch 7, flat-footed 12 (-1 Dex, +5 natural, -2 size)

**hp** 94 (9d8+54)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

---

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

**Melee** bite +14 (2d6+13)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

---

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 28, **Dex** 9, **Con** 23, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 26 (30 against trip)

**Feats** Dazzling Display, Endurance, Intimidating Prowess, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Intimidate +15, Perception +7, Swim +23

**SQ** hold breath (as seal), terrifying

---

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** cold oceans

**Organization** solitary, pair or rookery (3-12 plus 40-80 females [see below])

**Treasure** none

---

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Terrifying (Ex)** Intimidate is always a class skill for elephant seals

Largest of all species of seal, the elephant seal is a brute of monstrous proportions. Despite their size and fearsome teeth, they eat only squid; their armament is used in defense of territories. Bull elephant seals maintain huge harems of females and battle bloodily with other males to control their turf. These fights can be fatal for the loser. Their weapons can easily be turned onto other threats, however—



only a foolish or suicidal hunter would dare pursue elephant seals. Elephant seal males would rather posture and threaten than actually fight—only if their elaborate threat displays are not heeded will one of the great beasts charge.

These statistics represent bull elephant seals. A cow elephant seal is much smaller and less aggressive by nature—they can be modeled using the statistics for an ordinary seal with the giant and advanced simple templates.

## DEATH'S HEAD DRAKE

This drake's powerful body, wide wings, and long slender tail are covered in short black feathers, while its four legs and head are sheathed in a layer of bone-white horn. Its face and eyes are clearly draconic, belying its somewhat avian appearance.

### DEATH'S HEAD DRAKE

CR8

XP 4,800

N Large dragon

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +15

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 94 (9d12+36)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8; +4 vs. disease

**Defensive Abilities** DR 5/bludgeoning or magic; **Immune** filth fever, paralysis, sleep; **Resist** cold 10

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (average)

**Melee** 2 claws +13 (1d6+5), bite +13 (1d10+5 plus disease), tail slap +8 (1d8+2)

**Space** 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with tail slap)

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (40 ft. cone, DC 20, 6d6 cold and piercing plus disease, usable every 1d4 rounds), raven's guide

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 4, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 27 (31 vs. trip)

**Feats** Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Dodge, Hover, Power Attack

**Skills** Appraise +1, Fly +6, Intimidate +6, Perception +15, Survival +14, Use Magic Device +6

**Languages** Draconic

**SQ** raven's friend

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** cold hills or plains

**Organization** solitary or pair

**Treasure** standard

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Breath Weapon (Su)** Once every 1d4 rounds, a death's head drake can spray a 40 ft. cone with a mixture of rimy bile and shards of sharpened bone. This attack deals 6d6 damage; half the damage is cold damage, but the other half is piercing damage and is not subject to resistance to cold-based attacks, though damage

reduction applies normally. In addition, any creature that fails its Reflex save must make an additional DC 20 Fortitude save or contract filth fever. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Disease (Ex)** *Filth fever*: Bite or breath weapon—injury; save Fort DC 18; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Raven's Guide (Su)** Once per day, a death's head drake can call forth 1d4+1 raven swarms as a standard action. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the drake for up to 1 hour, though they may remain in the area if sufficient carrion is available.

#### Raven's Friend (Ex)

A death's head drake is immune to damage, blindness, and distraction effects caused by raven swarms. Crows, ravens, and similar birds of the animal type do not attack a death's head drake unless compelled to do so by magic.

Also called the bone drake or raven drake and referred to in Skald by such kennings as "Raven Guide", "Swan of Bones", and "Carrion-Jarl", death's head drakes are powerful, animalistic, but surprisingly nonaggressive scavengers. Content to loom over battlefields in a cloud of ravens or carrion crows until flesh

is available, they only hunting when

## NOTE:

Raven swarms appear in the *Tome of Horrors Complete*, but can be approximated by a bat swarm with the advanced template. Instead of causing bleed, creatures damaged by a raven swarm must make a Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d4 days or until healed.





times are lean. Physically unusual for its black bird-like feathers, its armored scutes underneath are actually bone-white, its featherless head and legs keeping it hygienic despite its diet; it's fused facial armor forming a skull-like keratinous outer layer, hence its name.

Unlike most drakes, death's heads will typically only attack if confronted in their lair, if a mate is attacked, or if a creature attacks them or their "pet" ravens. Most are content are to allow a humanoid or other scavenger within yards so long as it does not challenge them for possession of a meal, and even mighty Ulfen warriors know to let a death's head have its fill before retrieving a fallen comrade or an enemy's effects. Like crows, jackdaws, and true dragons, death's head drakes enjoy shiny objects and will often hoard interesting items from their food, though not necessarily the most valuable. Death's head drakes have a rudimentary understanding of Draconic, but rarely speak more than single-word warnings to those challenging it. Although juveniles are solitary, adults usually mate for life, though they hunt separately, brooding yearly, with a clutch of one to three eggs. Somewhat common in northwest Avistan and the Crown of the World, death's head drakes can live up to 150 years, and are about 10 feet long with tail, weighing in around 800 pounds.



## THE HONORED DEAD: EINHERJAR

Einherjar ("lone warriors") are the honored dead of the Ulfen, many former Linnorm Kings, who were restored to a semblance of life following their arrival at Valenahall. They appear as they did prior to their death, whole in body and with a fire of spirit that is unquenchable. They serve as guardians at Valenahall, while others actively protect the Ulfen people. In particular, many einherjar hunt the evil creatures known as wendigo, seeking to destroy or imprison the cannibal spirits before they can spread their curse further through the North.

### CREATING AN EINHERJAR

"Einherjar" is an acquired template that can be added to any living, corporeal humanoid. An einherjar retains the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**CR:** Same as the base creature +1.

**Alignment:** Any, except neutral evil and chaotic evil.

**Type:** The creature's type changes to undead. Do not recalculate HD, BAB, or saves.

**Senses:** An einherjar gains darkvision 60 ft.

**Defensive Abilities:** An einherjar gains DR 5/slashing (if HD 11 or less) or 10/slashing (if HD 12 or more), cold resistance 10, and channel resistance +4 in addition to all of the defensive abilities granted by the undead type. An einherjar can eat and drink.

**Special Abilities:** An einherjar gains the following special attacks.

**Hearth of Valenahall (Su):** Einherjar are not fuelled by energies from the negative material plane, but rather a spiritual tie to the First World. Positive and negative energy affect an einherjar as a living creature. Effects which control or influence undead (such as the spells *command undead* or *hide from undead*) affect an einherjar normally,

**Meat and Mead (Su):** Once per day when an einherjar consumes a meal containing freshly cooked meat and alcoholic drink, he gains the benefits of *heroes' feast*. If a einherjar consumes a *heroes' feast*, the morale bonus to attack rolls and Will saves is doubled and the einherjar becomes immune to fear for the duration of the spell.

**Spell-like Abilities:** An einherjar with a Charisma score of 11 or higher gains the ability to cast *phantom steed* at will as a spell-like ability (CL 8th). The einherjar may only create one steed at a time.

**Abilities:** Str +2, Dex +2, Cha +2. An einherjar enjoys bonuses due to age gained prior to death, but does not suffer the penalties. As an undead creature, an einherjar has no Constitution score.

**Skills:** An einherjar with racial Hit Dice has skill points per racial Hit Die equal to 4 + its Intelligence modifier.

## EINHERJAR AND THE FAITHFUL

Einherjar are the honored dead, those among the Ulfen who were celebrated for their victories in battle and their fearlessness in the face of death. However, being honored does not change the fact that they are undead and the faithful of many different deities have opinions on their continued existence.

**Pharasma:** Priests of the Lady of Graves assume that einherjar are no different than any other undead and seek their destruction. However, many of the priests' usual means of fighting the undead are ineffective against einherjar. Einherjar have the support of their living shield mates, if not whole communities of Ulfen warriors willing to fight by their side. Ultimately, all but the most militant members of the church of Pharasma chooses to turn a blind eye to the einherjar, rather than raise the ire of the North.

**Cayden Cailean:** Although there have been einherjar for far longer than Cayden Cailean has been a god, some outsiders (including some followers of the Drunken Hero) believe that he is responsible for the creation of the einherjar. In truth, while many einherjar are more than willing to raise a mug to Cayden, the beliefs of the lone warriors run the whole gamut of Ulfen faiths.

**The Eldest:** The kings of the north earn their crowns by defeating linnorms and presenting their heads as trophies. This act draws the ire of Ragadahn the Water Lord: the father of all linnorms and one of the Eldest of the First World.



Besides Ragadahn, it is likely that the einherjar have ties to another of the Eldest, but which is up to speculation. The energy which animates their forms seeps through the thin barrier separating the First World from Valenhall, but there is a directing force which selects which of the honored dead that arrive at those halls will rise as einherjar.

## FROSTED CREATURE TEMPLATE

Frosted creatures have adapted to the constant cold of the far north. This template cannot be applied to incorporeal creatures or creatures with the Fire subtype.

### Rebuild Rules:

**Type:** gain the cold subtype; **AC** increase natural armor by +5; **Defensive Abilities** gain immunity to cold; **Weaknesses** vulnerability to fire; **Ability Scores** +2 to Con; **Special Qualities** frosted, tundra sight

**Frosted (Su)** A frosted creature deals an additional 1d6 cold damage with its natural and unarmed attacks. Any creature attacking it with natural or unarmed attacks also suffers 1d6 cold damage for each successful attack.

**Tundra Acclimation (Ex)** Frosted creatures suffer no penalties on Perception checks or to movement due to snow or ice.

## SPIDER, FROSTED HUNTING CR 2

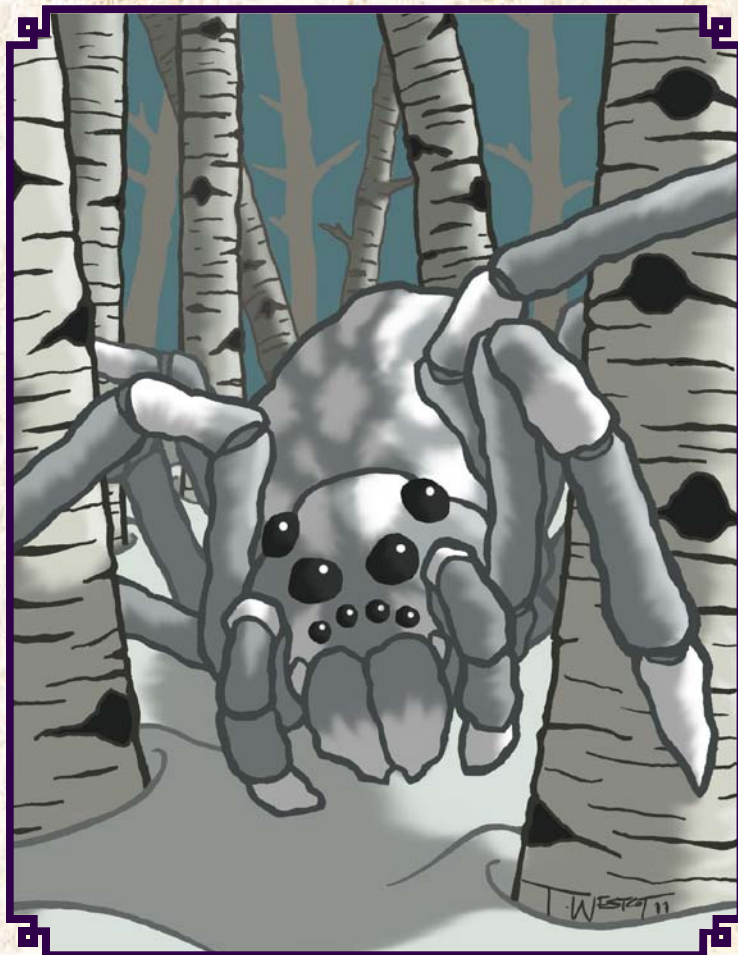
XP 600

N Medium vermin (Cold)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +4

### DEFENSE

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)



**hp** 19 (3d8+6)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

**Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects; **Vulnerability** fire

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +2 (1d6 plus 1d6 cold plus poison)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 11, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15 (27 vs. trip)

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Climb +16, Perception +4, Stealth +7;

**Racial Modifiers** +8 Acrobatics, +16 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** cold mountains, cold hills, cold forests

**Organization** solitary, pair, or colony (3–8)

**Treasure** incidental

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Strength damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

**Frosted (Su)** A frosted spider deals 1d6 Cold damage to any creature attacking it with natural weapons or unarmed attacks.

**Tundra Acclimation (Ex)** A frosted spider suffers no penalties on Perception checks or to movement due to snow or ice.

A frosted hunting spider is pale grey with mottled white markings; a typical adult has a body 3 to 4 feet in length with chitin-covered legs that give it an overall span of up to 12 feet. It is perfectly adapted to hunting small prey in the snow covered mountains and forests of the region. Climbing through trees, it stalks its land-based prey, then attacks by pouncing down upon it. Its poisonous bite is more than enough to bring down most creatures its own size or smaller. Frosted hunting spiders sometimes hunt even bigger prey when hunting as a colony.

## GREMLIN, GRIMOLOCHIN

*This appears to be a large housecat, but when unobserved, it walks on its hind legs, smokes the master's pipe, and empties the ashes into the soup.*

## GRIMOLOCHIN CR 3

XP 800

LE Tiny fey

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +11

### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, +2 size)

**hp** 19 (3d6+9)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

**DR** 5/cold iron; **SR** 13

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +3 (1d4), bite +3 (1d3)

**Space** 2 1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Special Attacks** swallow whole (no damage, AC 11, 1 hp), steal breath

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +14)

*At will—speak with animals*

*2/day—charm animal (DC 15), charm monster (DC 18), charm person (DC 15), invisibility (DC 16), knock, modify memory*

*(DC 18), sleep (DC 15), suggestion (DC 17)*



Hi, everyone. I asked the gang if I could do the pitch this time.

Right about now, you and yours are planning for the holidays. Doesn't really matter what you celebrate, it's that time of year when people get time off, hang out together, eat lots of food, and experience joy.

Personally, I love it. I feel renewed, ready for a new year of hope.

As you're considering gifts to give your friends, maybe you could give a copy of this new thing Big Irish did -

(Like hoping I can figure out how to get my campaign back under control, and how to keep Jake or Ronin from killing my new boyfriend.)

### The BRING DICE & CHIPS HOLIDAY COLLECTION, 2011

It's every single strip, starting with the embarrassing beginning of my campaign, right up to where Jake's nephew ate his 12-sider.

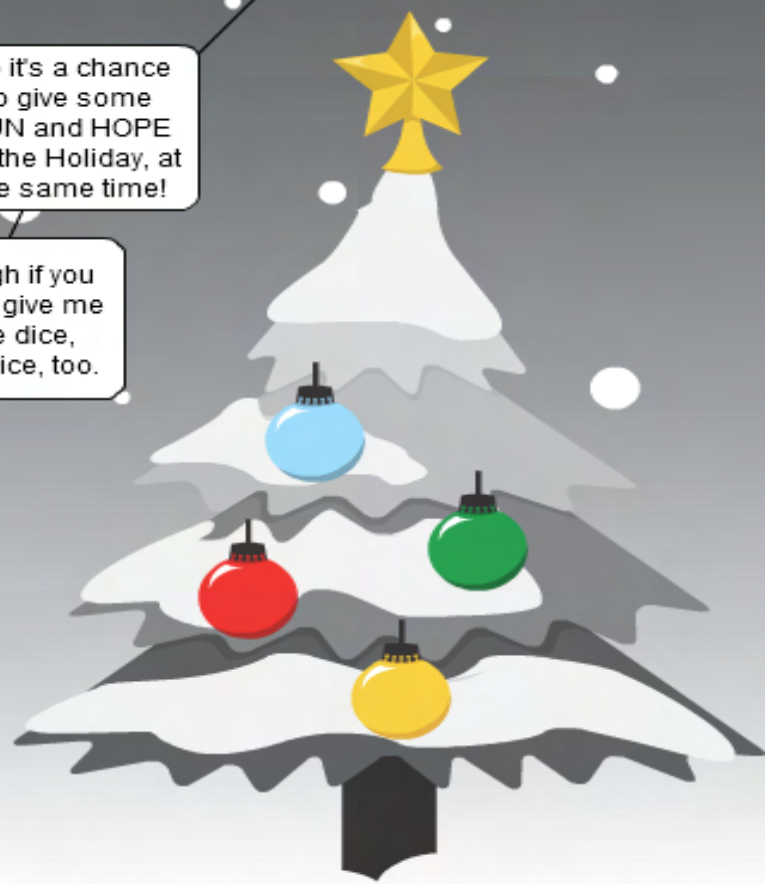
Big Irish does a running commentary throughout, just like on a special DVD (only, you know, with text).

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(Though if you want to give me some dice, that's nice, too.

Mine roll just awful!



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Thanks for the years of support, and I look forward to doing many strips for you!

Sean Patrick Fannon AKA "Big Irish"



## STATISTICS

**Str** 11, **Dex** 16, **Con** 10, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12

**Feats** Acrobatic Steps, Animal Affinity, Nimble Moves<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Acrobatics +9, Bluff +14, Climb +17, Diplomacy + 10, Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +7, Perception +11, Ride +8, Stealth +17; Racial Modifiers +4 Handle Animal, +4 Perception, Grimolochin use the better of their Str or Dex modifier when Climbing

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Sylvan

**SQ** hag's puke

## ECOLOGY

**Environment** towns, farms, roadside inns, ships

**Organization** solitary, pair, or mob (3–6)

**Treasure** standard

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Hag's Puke (Su)** A grimolochin has an extraordinarily capacious gullet, able to hold as much as the smallest size Bag of Holding without changing its outward dimensions or weight. The grimolochin usually uses this ability to drain cows and beer kegs of rival farms, disgorging the contents later, but can also steal other wealth, such as coins, so long as it is fine enough to swallow whole. Miraculously, even chicks and live trout can survive such transportation.

**Steal Breath (Su)** If a grimolochin sits on a victim's chest, it can suck their breath out as a full-round action. The victim immediately begins to drown unless they make a successful Constitution check (DC 10). Every round the grimolochin is able to suck out their victims breath, the victim must make another Constitution check, with the DC increasing by +1 each round beyond the first. If a grimolochin successfully sucks a victims breath for four consecutive rounds, the victim falls unconscious, drops to -1 hp, and is dying.

Grimolochin are wicked and crafty fey. They pose as ordinary housecats for the region—a Varki forest cat in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, a Hoarwood blue in Irrisen, or even a lucky tortoiseshell in Tian Xia—a grimolochin first appears as a thin and mangy stray. It insinuates itself into the everyday life of farms, households, inns, shops, and ships, charming the master or mistress of the place. The grimolochin slowly becomes sleek and fat as it convinces the owner that it is the place's "luck." In a perverse way, this is actually true.

A grimolochin runs its personal fiefdom with a ruthless efficiency the envy of petty tyrants. Lazy servants, ne'er-do-well sons, and other useless layabouts—as well as willful servants, faithful pets, and family members who somehow resist the grimolochin's charms—are convinced to seek their fortunes elsewhere or meet with unfortunate "accidents" ranging from being tripped down the stairs to kicked in the head by a horse. The grimolochin then slips invisibly into their rooms, sits on their chest, and steals their breath.

Grimolochins occasionally serve as familiars to hags. As such, they

have a particular hatred of other familiars, seeing them as rivals. A grimolochin does its best to see that any such beast has a quick trip to the bottom of the nearest well.

Once a grimolochin has its personal demesne ordered to its liking, it sets about eliminating the competition: a rival farm, household, inn, or other business. With farmsteads, the grimolochin sucks the milk

from the neighbor's cows then vomits it up into its mistress's churn. With inns, the same can be done with wine or beer. With other businesses, the grimolochin may have to get creative, but has been known to make off with everything from piglets to stacks of rare books. "Accidents" are then arranged for the rival, usually simple things like leaving the barn door open or setting a fire, but more than sufficient to cover any theft.

At the same time, the grimolochin uses its suggestion ability to convince visitors to leave as much of their wealth as possible, making lavish gifts to the mistress of its house, purchasing elaborate banquets at the inn where it sleeps by the fire, and so on.

Once the competition and customers have been driven to bankruptcy, the grimolochin begins to enjoy

the fruits of its labors. Braiding the manes of any horses in the barn and riding them until they are knackered is a common favorite. Persuading its "master" to lavish it with presents, everything from jeweled collars to magical boots, is another popular standby. Drinking the wine and cream and not spitting it back up is a third. Inviting in the rats and mice for a banquet in its honor is a fourth. But nothing is more favored than inviting in other wandering grimolochins to share in the bounty it has built.

Eventually, the original business or household is reduced to ruin, the servants dead or gone, the visitors and customers as well. All that is left is a madman or madwoman scrabbling to care for the greedy grimolochins. When nothing is left, they sit on his chest and suck his breath, then feast on his remains and move on.

## GREMLIN, PSAMMEAD

*This strange furry creature has long arms and legs with hands and feet like a monkey's, a tubby body shaped like a spider's, ears like a bat, whiskers like a rat, but the strangest thing are its beautiful eyes, which rise up on stalks like a snail's. It regards you with curiosity, as if waiting for you to speak.*

### PSAMMEAD

CR 3

XP 800

CE Tiny fey

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12





---

**DEFENSE****AC** 19, touch 16, flat-footed 15

(+4 Dex, +3 natural, +2 size)

**hp** 19 (3d6+9)**Fort** +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** painful**Weaknesses** hydrophobia

---

**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft., climb 20

ft., burrow 20 ft. (sand or gravel only)

**Melee** bite +3 (1d4 plus grab), 2 claws +3 (1d4)**Space** 2 1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 13th; concentration +14)At will—*prestidigitation*1/day—*legend lore*

---

**STATISTICS****Str** 11, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1 (+5 grapple); **CMD** 15**Feats** DeceitfulB, Iron Will, Improved Iron Will**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Bluff +9, Climb +14, Disguise +9, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (nobility) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Perception +12, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +15; Racial Modifiers +4 Knowledge (all), +4 Perception; Psammead use the better of their Str or Dex modifier when climbing**Languages** Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Draconic, Sylvan**SQ** sand bath, wishgranter

---

**ECOLOGY****Environment** deserts, wastelands, sand pits, and seashores**Organization** solitary, pair, or mob (3–6)**Treasure** standard

---

**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Ape Monkey (Ex)** A psammead may retract its eyestalks and assume the appearance of a tiny ape or monkey. It takes a DC 15 Knowledge Nature check to recognize this is no ordinary variety, but a DC 25 check to realize it is in fact a disguised psammead. This ability does not function when it grants a wish, for when it dies, a psammead stretches out its eyes, holds its breath and swells alarmingly, revealing its true form.**Hydrophobia (Ex)** Psammeads have an extraordinary weakness to ordinary water, either fresh or salt, for to them it acts as a contact poison. If they get wet, they must make a Fortitude save (DC 13) or take 1d3 Con damage every round until dried. Consequently they fear it greatly. Snow and ice are harmless but disliked.**Sand Bath (Ex)** If a psammead bathes in pure dry sand for ten minutes, it gains the effects of a greater restoration and a heal spell. It may use this ability once per day.**Wishgranter (Su)** A psammead can, if it wishes, grant any wish made in its presence. The primary effect of the wish, however, lasts no more than a day. At some point set by the psammead—typically sunset, midnight, or dawn—the thing wished for turns

to stone, crumbles to dry sand, or simply vanishes.

All secondary effects remain, for good or ill—generally ill. A psammead rarely grants more than one wish per person per day and usually will grant only one wish to a group, as that causes more strife and discord.

**Painful Wishes (Su)** When a psammead grants a wish, it finds the process actively painful. This pain has a side benefit of stripping away any mental compulsions on the psammead.

Indigenous to deserts and seashores from Osirion to the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, a psammead (pronounced *sammyad*) is an ancient mischievous gremlin who disguises its true nature with an air of curmudgeonly scholarliness. It proudly presents itself as “a sand fairy” from aeons past and will be offended at any mention of other gremlins, as if being reminded of disreputable relations. In truth, this is because the psammead considers its cousins churlish amateurs. It then launches into a discussion of the wonders of ages past, particularly dangerous creatures such as dinosaurs, hoping someone will say something like “I wish I could see a dinosaur!”

Those too wise or lucky to fall into such obvious traps gain the psammead’s grudging respect. A psammead is particularly drawn to children, as their wishes have the most potential for mischief.

While it is possible to intimidate or charm a psammead into granting a wish, the pain of granting a wish breaks any mental compulsion. The psammead then twists the wish into some lethal form and goes off to find someone less boring and more respectful.

The only truly “safe” way to influence a psammead is via rescue. While wicked, a psammead is a true fey and hates being beholden. It will grant its rescuers one good wish with no twisting, but still only lasting a day.

**KAULDER***Luminous blue tattoos cover this glowering bone-white elf. Clad only in bits of studded leather and the barest of loincloths, he ignores the cold and wind swirling snow about him. With a snarl, he takes up his strange obsidian sword and charges.***KAULDER****CR 1****XP** 400

Barbarian 1

LN Medium fey (cold)

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +8

---

**DEFENSE****AC** 14, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, –2 rage)**hp** 15 (1d12++3)**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4**DR** 1/cold iron; **Immune** cold**Weaknesses** vulnerable to cold iron, fire



**Table: Kaulder Weapons**

Exotic Weapons	Cost	Dmg(S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Weight	Type	Special
<i>One-handed Weapons</i>							
Shardblade, Kaulder	25gp	1d6	1d8	18-20/x	23 lbs.	P, S	Fragile
<i>Two-handed Weapons</i>							
Shardblade, Kaulder Double	125gp	1d6/1d6	1d8/1d8	18-20/x	26 lbs.	P, S	fragile, double

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 40 ft. (30 ft in heavy armor or with heavy load)

**Melee** mwk kaulder shardblade +7 (1d8+6/18-20)

**Ranged** longbow +4 (1d8/x3)

**Special Attacks** rage (5 rounds/day), rage powers (scent)

**Base Statistics** When not raging, the barbarian's statistics are **AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; **hp** 13; mwk kaulder shardblade +5 (1d8+3/18-20); **Str** 14, **Con** 13; **CMB** 3, **CMD** 16; **Climb** +5, **Swim** +5

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 18, **Dex** 17, **Con** 17, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Weapon Focus (kaulder shardblade)

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Climb +7, Perception +8, Stealth -4, Survival +6, Swim +7

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**SQ** fast movement, fey-blooded, rimerunner, luminous tattoos, weapon familiarity

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** any arctic land

**Organization** solitary, pair, pack (3-8), or troop (20 - 200)

**Treasure** NPC gear (studded leather armor, masterwork shardblade, longbow with 20 arrows, 25 gp)

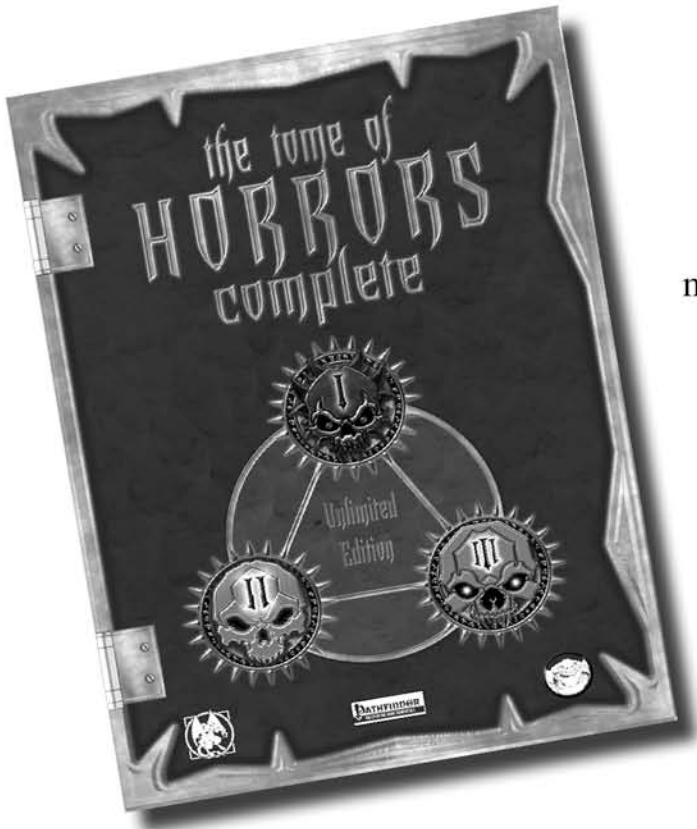
Kaulder are the "cold fey" armies that marched down from the Crown of the World to conquer the section of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings that would one day be called Irrisen. Baba Yaga brought these arctic elves to Golarion as shock troops alongside packs of arctic goblins. An oath sworn to her under duress after the disappearance of all their arcane clansfolk, young and old, in the course of one moonless night holds them in servitude. Kaulder bristle at having to fight alongside honorless arctic goblins, but do so out of the hope that their loyalty will one day bring their loved ones safely home.

Kaulder stand nearly a foot taller than Golarion elves. They have white skin and hair, and pale blue eyes that miss very little. The standard practice amongst their tribes is to tattoo parts of their bodies in angular patterns with a luminous blue ink that sheds light around them. These tattoos are arranged in patterns that tell kaulder each other's name, lineage, and defining moments. Due to their immunity to cold and to display these tattoos, kaulder go about nude or barely clothed unless readying themselves for battle. Modesty is unheard of in kaulder clans.

Kaulder society is a martial one, with villages set up like military posts, and all kaulder, including the children, receiving ranks and titles. Exile is the highest







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dishonor a kaulder can receive. Outcasts are treated with a depilatory cream that prevents their hair from ever growing back, and their forehead is marked with the Outcast's Brand, a rune that can never be expunged. They are forced to drink a vile concoction that causes their tattoos to dim and then disappear, so that they can always be noticed and then ignored by other Kaulder.

### Kaulder Characters

Kaulder are defined by their class levels – they do not possess racial HD. They have the following racial traits.

**+2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma:** Kaulder are lithe and perceptive, but harsh and unyielding.

**Medium:** Kaulder are Medium creatures and have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.

**Normal Speed:** Kaulder have a base speed of 30 feet.

**Low-Light Vision:** Kaulder can see twice as far as humans in conditions of dim light.

**Cold Subtype:** Kaulder are immune to cold damage, but suffer 1½ times fire damage.

**Feyblooded:** Kaulder have DR 1/cold iron. They suffer 1 extra damage from cold iron weapons. This extra damage is in addition to cold iron weapons bypassing their damage reduction.

**Rimerunner:** Kaulder endlessly roam the tundra of Irrisen as nomads. A kaulder receives a +4 racial bonus on Constitution checks and Fortitude saves to avoid fatigue, exhaustion, and the ill effects of running, forced marches, starvation, and thirst.

**Keen Senses:** Kaulder receive a +2 racial bonus on Perception checks.

**Luminous Tattoos:** Kaulder tattoos shed light around them in a 5' radius. A kaulder suffers a -6 penalty to Stealth checks unless he covers his body entirely.

**Weapon Familiarity:** Kaulder are proficient with longbows (including composite longbows), and shortbows (including composite shortbows) and treat any weapon with the word “kaulder” in its name as a martial weapon.

**Languages:** Kaulder begin play speaking Common and Sylvan. Kaulder with high intelligence scores can choose from the following: Draconic, Dwarvish, Elven, Giant, and Goblin.

### Kaulder Weapons

A forge requires great heat, and kaulder weaponsmiths must make due in the frigid arctic. Kaulder swords are extremely fine but unfortunately brittle.

**Shardblade, Kaulder:** The kaulder shardblade is a straight and exceedingly sharp blade formed from a single piece of knapped obsidian.

You can use the Weapon Finesse feat to apply your Dexterity modifier instead

of your Strength modifier to attack rolls with a kaulder shardblade sized for you, even though it isn't a light weapon.

**Shardblade, Kaulder Double:** An advanced version of the standard kaulder shardblade perfect for nimble kaulder hands.

## LANDVAETTIR

*The ground beneath your feet rumbles as if the earth itself were roaring. The land before you rises, coalescing into an enormous form that moves toward you with menace.*

### LANDVAETTIR

CR16

XP 76,800

N Gargantuan fey (earth, elemental, incorporeal)

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision; tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +40

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 16, flat-footed 13 (+7 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, -4 size)

**hp**

221





(26d6+130)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +19, **Will** +22

**Defensive Abilities** incorporeal; **Immune** elemental traits

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** burrow 50 ft., fly 100 ft. (perfect); earth glide

**Spells Known** (CL 16th; concentration +23)

8th (3/day)—*earthquake*

7th (6/day)—*animate plants, creeping doom*

6th (7/day)—*find the path, liveoak, tar pool*<sup>2</sup> (DC 23)

5th (7/day)—*baleful polymorph* (DC 22), *insect plague, transmute rock to mud, wall of thorns*

4th (7/day)—*control water, geyser*<sup>1</sup> (DC 21), *giant vermin, spike stones*

3rd (8/day)—*burst of nettles*<sup>3</sup> (DC 20), *dominate animal* (DC 20), *plant growth, spike growth*

2nd (8/day)—*fog cloud, gust of wind, stone call*<sup>1</sup> (DC 19), *summon swarm, warp wood*

1st (8/day)—*calm animals* (DC 18), *decompose corpse*<sup>3</sup>, *entangle* (DC 18), *faerie fire, obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*create water, detect magic, flare* (DC 17), *guidance* (DC 17), *know direction, light, mending* (DC 17), *purify food and drink* (DC 17), *read magic*

<sup>1</sup> – See *Advanced Player's Guide*

<sup>2</sup> – See *Ultimate Combat*

<sup>3</sup> – See *Ultimate Magic*

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 38, **Dex** 14, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 24

**Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +31; **CMD** 51

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Penetration, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Spell Penetration

**Skills** Fly +33, Knowledge (geography) +29, Knowledge (local) +29, Knowledge (nature) +29, Perception +40, Sense Motive +34

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** any natural surface area

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** incidental

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Breath Weapon (Su)** When manifested in physical form, a landvaettir has a breath weapon, which it can use once every 1d4+1 rounds. Normally, this is a blast of earth and stones in a 60 ft. cone, doing 10d6 bludgeoning damage and blinding those in the area of effect for 1d4 rounds (Ref DC 28 for ½ damage, negates blindness).

A landvaettir that manifests in a naturally volcanic area will have an alternate breath weapon, a geyser of scalding water in a 60 ft line. Those in the area of effect that fail their saves take 10d6 fire damage and are knocked prone.

**Manifestation (Su)** As an incorporeal spirit, a landvaettir can only interact with the physical world through its spells. However, as a full round action it can build itself a physical body using the elements of the surrounding land. A landvaettir will normally have a particular shape it takes when manifesting. It can take the form of an animal, humanoid (giant), or linnorm. No matter the form, it will be Gargantuan in size. This form has all the physical movement rates and natural attacks of the chosen form, but no other abilities of the creature. The

landvaettir retains its type and subtypes, except incorporeal. The landvaettir loses its deflection bonus to armor class, but gains twice that as a natural armor bonus and DR 10/-. Size modifiers adjust accordingly.

**Example:**

**MANIFESTED LANDVAETTIR (LINNORM FORM)**

N Gargantuan fey (earth, elemental)

**AC** 23, touch 9, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +14 natural, -4 size)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 100 ft. (average), swim 60 ft.

**DR** 10/-; **Immune** elemental traits

**Melee** bite +23 (2d8+14/19-20), 2 claws +23 (1d8+14), tail +18 (2d6+7)

**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

**CMD** 44

**Skills** (as above, except as follows) Fly +25, Swim +22

**Spells** A landvaettir casts spells as a 16th level oracle, but chooses spells known from the druid spell list.

The wild, untamed lands of the north are the dwelling place of many mysterious types of fey, but few are so enigmatic and powerful as the landvaettir, or land spirits. These forces of the First World are drawn to the beauty of the wild places, and claim areas of land as their own, preserving them against those who would despoil them. This area might be as small as a grove of trees or a meadow to as large as a whole forest or a mountain. As mercurial as most fey, their reactions to intrusion into their lands can vary wildly. A group of orcs felling trees may be utterly destroyed, where a lost little girl might be gently guided from the wood, or searchers may be led to her with magic. Where magic fails, a spirit will manifest a physical form out of the very land, using it to repel intruders to the best of its ability. Some landvaettir will allow settlements to grow nearby, so long as the residents are respectful of its domain. If it is unable to defeat interlopers, the land spirit will depart, seeking some other portion of pristine wilderness to claim for its own.

Some Ulfen sailors speak of sjoavaettir, or sea spirits, who claim inlets or bays as their own, using magics to deter or sink ships, and manifesting in forms suited for water rather than land.

**NO LIFE KING**

*An ancient skeleton dressed in plain rags stands in a long forgotten martial stance, blood slowly dripping from every joint*

**NO LIFE KING**

**CR 12**

**XP** 19,200

LE medium undead

**Init** +15; Senses darkvision 60ft; perception +30

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 27, touch 21, flat-footed 16 (+6 Dex, +5 dodge, +6 natural)

**HP** 161 (17d8+85); fast healing 8

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +15

**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, deathless, undead traits; DR 10/bludgeoning; Immune cold, electricity

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 60 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +16 (1d8+16 plus 2 bleed), 2 slams +16 (1d8+16 plus 2 bleed)

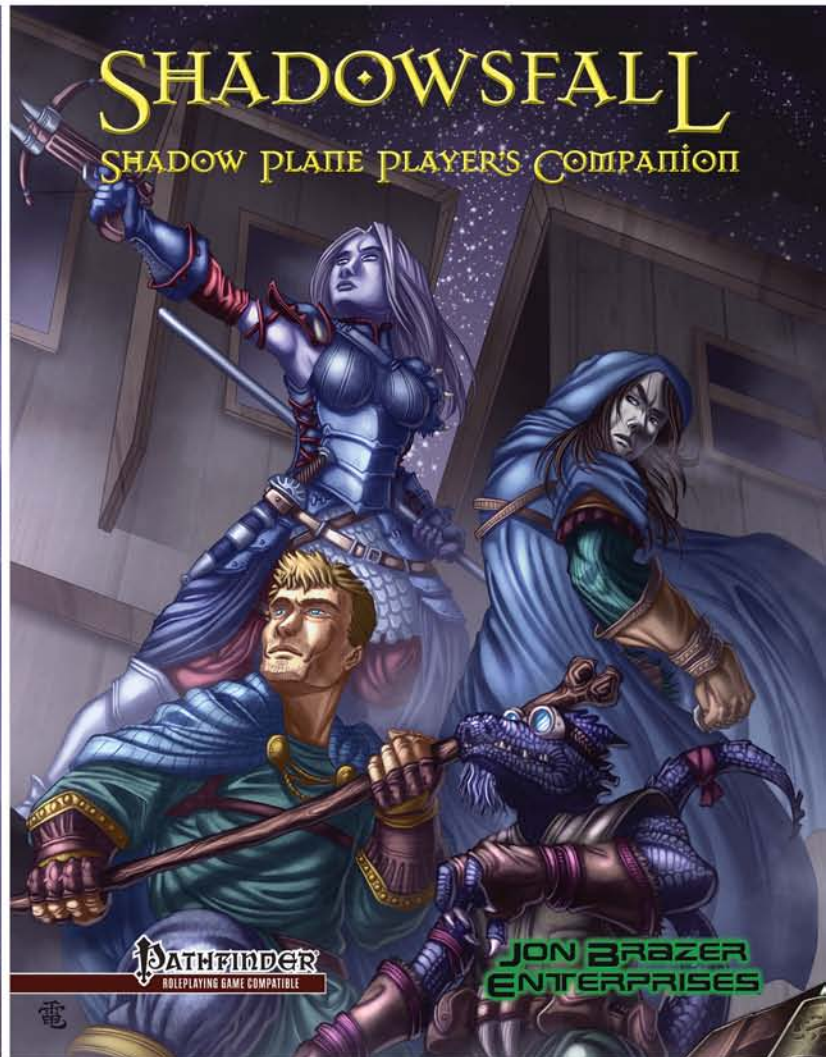
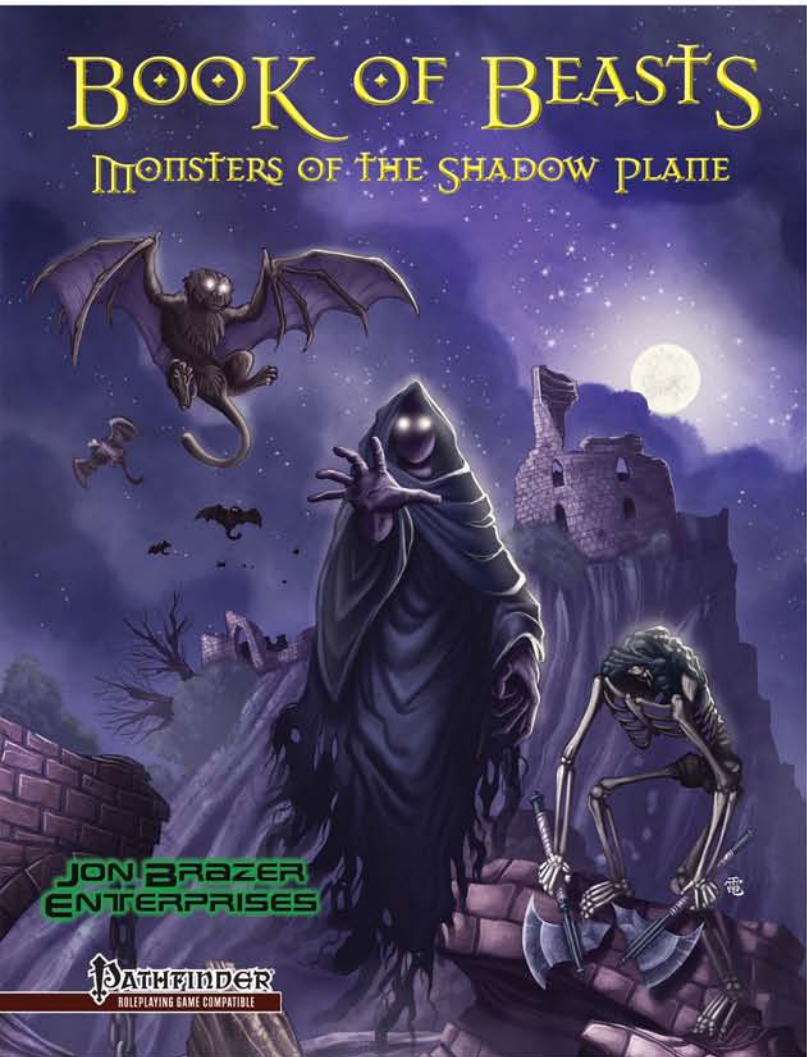
**Special Attacks** natural killer

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 27 **Dex** 22 **Con** – **Int** 18 **Wis** 20 **Cha** 21



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**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 46

**Feats** Catch Off-Guard, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Improvised Weapon Mastery, Power Attack, Throw Anything, Vital Strike,

**Skills** Acrobatics +23, Climb +28, Intimidate +25, Perception +30, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +24, Stealth +26, Swim +25

**Languages**

**SQ** combat mastery, warrior's edge, king of weapons, body of swords

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** any

**Organisation** solitary

**Treasure** standard

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Body of Swords**

**(Ex)** After countless years of facing tougher and tougher opponents, a No Life King is a weapon in and of itself. Its claws and slam attacks deal damage as a Huge creature.

**Deathless (Su)** The will of a No Life King is so strong that it will keep on fighting even after it should have been destroyed many times over. A No Life King is not destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points, returning to unlife in 1d10 minutes with 1 hit point. A No Life King can only be permanently destroyed if it is reduced to 0 hit points by smite evil, or a positive energy effect. If reduced to 0 hit points in the area of an antimagic field, or similar effect, this ability is suppressed for the effects duration.

**Combat Mastery (Ex)** Through centuries of practice, a No Life King has mastered countless techniques for fighting in combat. No Life Kings use their full Hit Dice when calculating their CMB and CMD. They never provoke attacks of opportunity when making combat maneuver checks.

**King of Weapons (Ex)** No Life Kings are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, along with all armor and shields (including tower shields). They never suffer any armor check penalties for wearing armor of any kind or wielding shields, nor do they never suffer any penalties for attacking with multiple weapons or natural attacks or to damage from off-hand attacks

**Natural Killer (Ex)** No Life Kings practice how to kill with a single blow every day of their eternal unlives. All of a No Life King's attacks deal 2 points of cumulative bleed damage. On a successful critical hit, a No Life King deals +2 points of bleed damage, and inflicts 1 negative level (DC 23) on the creature struck.

**Warrior's Edge (Ex)** Their eternal march for ever-greater conquests has improved No Life Kings' prowess in combat. They gain a +5 bonus to Perception checks, initiative, and a +5 dodge bonus to Armor Class.

No Life Kings are the remains of ancient and powerful warriors who were no longer challenged by their typical opponents. These warriors became so fixated upon reaching martial perfection in their lives, they left civilization to train and fight monsters of legend. When such warriors are denied their death in battle, and die due to starvation, hypothermia, dehydration or disease, their souls are anchored to their bodies.

They are reborn into beings who live only to train and defeat opponents in an effort to become the ultimate warrior.

A No Life King will spend the rest of its unnatural life training in solitude in the depths of the wilderness honing its ability to fight beyond any mortal's ability. They will challenge large monsters like Linnorms, Dragons and Giants to prove their might.

No Life Kings will usually stalk bands of adventurers to gauge how powerful they are; if they deem the adventurers to be a challenge, they will attack them immediately, taking out divine casters first who are the most likely to kill the No Life King permanently. Afterwards, they attack arcane casters. Finally, they concentrate on the martial classes. If the group of adventurers contains a paladin, the No Life King attacks the paladin first. No Life Kings always use combat maneuvers to gain an advantage in battle, be it to disarm the fighter from his weapon, to steal the wands of the wizard, or bull rush the rogue off a cliff.

**OUTIKO: THE SONS OF THE WENDIGO**

*The creature on the path behind was difficult to see through the driving snow, but lately it has grown bolder, drawing nearer each day. From the glimpses it has allowed, it is long limbed, extremely thin, and covered in grey to snow-white, gore-stained fur. Its head is that of a horned beast, such as a caribou, but with a maw filled with sharp yellowed fangs, and its hands and feet end in sharp talons. Its lips are curled back in a snarl, flecked with blood. Its eyes betray cunning intelligence, as it stares defiantly into your own. You now know the disappearance of your best two dogs was no accident, as it playfully chews on the remnants of their harness.*

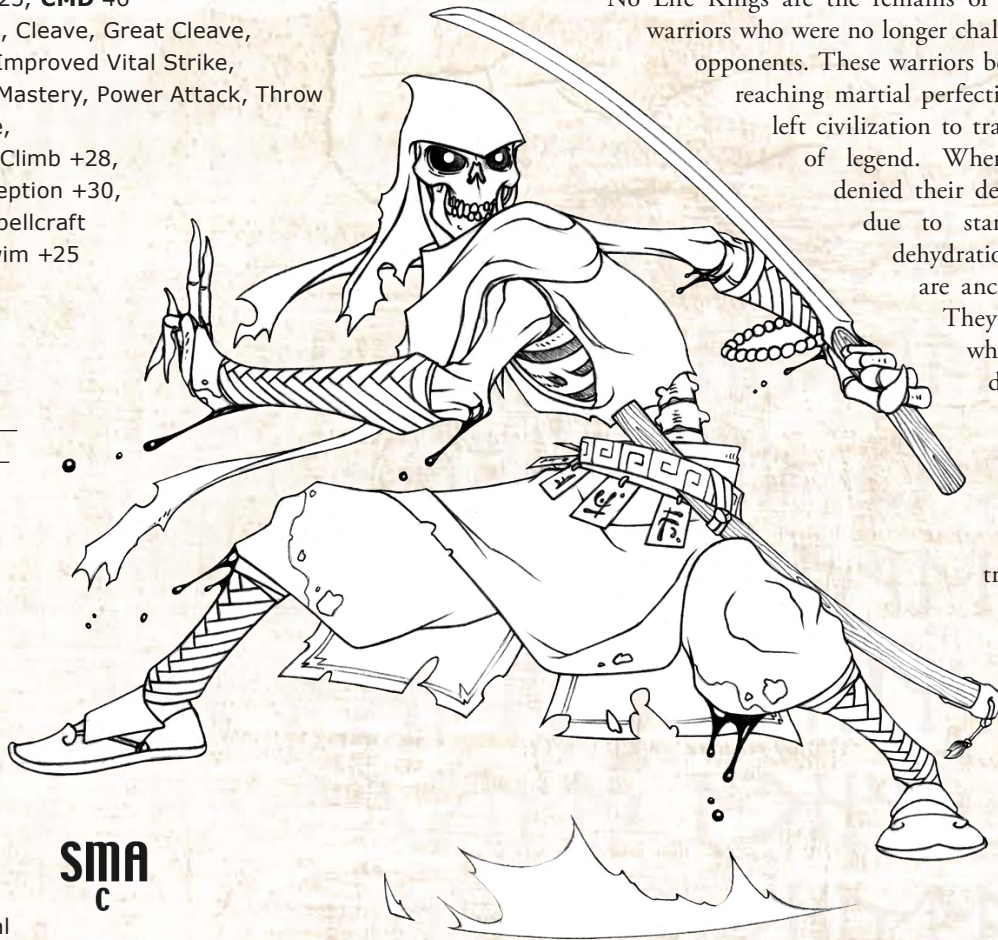
**OUTIKO**

**CR 2**

**XP** 600

**CE** Small outsider (cold, native)

**Init** +3, **Senses** darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision, scent; Perception +8



**SMA**  
**C**



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**DEFENSE**

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**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 22 (3d10+6)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

**DR** 5/cold iron; **Immune** cold, fear

**Weaknesses** vulnerability to fire

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**OFFENSE**

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**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +5 (1d4+1), 2 claws +5 (1d3+1)

**Special Attacks** stalking hunger

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL3rd; concentration +2)

At will—*detect animals or plants, know direction*

3/day—*piercing shriek*<sup>1</sup>

1/day—*sleet storm*

1 *See Ultimate Magic*

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**STATISTICS**

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**Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 9

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Ability Focus (stalking hunger), Blind-Fight

**Skills** Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (geography) +1, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (planes) +4, Perception +8, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +2, Stealth +7, Survival +8

**Languages** Aklo, Common

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**ECOLOGY**

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**Environment** any cold

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** incidental

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

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**Stalking Hunger (Su)** As a standard action, an outiko can denote one target within line of sight as its quarry. The targeted creature becomes the repository into which the outiko seeks to relieve its near endless hunger. An outiko's first successful attack to damage its quarry forces the quarry to make a Fort save (DC 14) or grow ravenously hungry, suffering the combined effects of both *feast of ashes* (see Chapter 5 of the *Advanced Player's Guide*) and *unshakable chill* (see Chapter 5 of *Ultimate Magic*). With the reduction of its hunger, an outiko gains the effects of *bleed* and *false life*, as well as being continuously aware of its quarry as per the *deathwatch* spell, regardless of distance, but not across planar boundaries.

Only one quarry can be affected at any time, and effects of this ability last for 24 hours, or until the quarry dies. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

**Tireless (Ex)** The outiko's body is inured to pain. The damage caused by hustling and forced marching is halved, as is the duration of any fatigue effect.

While travellers in the far north have heard tales of the dreaded Wendigo, fewer are aware of its lesser relative, the Outiko. Outiko are

created from spirits of travellers who starved to death in the waste. Travelling alone, these unfortunates found themselves stranded, cold, and dying, their last moments spent calling out to the powers of the wild for aid. Unfortunately, dark and unseen forces answer that call without providing the succor craved. In this new form of the outiko, they continue to hunger, their only respite being to pass that pain onto others. The outiko stalk the wild places, in search of travellers to devour.

They enjoy whittling down prey before they strike, trailing victims for days, while plaguing their journeys with mishaps.

Evil tribal humanoids worship the wendigo as gods, and recognise a kinship with these lesser cousins, seeing them as messengers of the greater spirits. The outiko encourage this belief, as it results in them being brought live sacrifices, or ritual cannibalism, which leaves scraps for them to scavenge. The outiko view this only as an ample supply of victims.

In rare circumstances, a shaman may convince an outiko that a permanent alliance would be to its benefit, and they form a symbiotic bond. They are reluctant to do this, as they find

it difficult to imagine foregoing a possible meal, but once done, the bonding process, supplemented by the increased kills the pair can collect, suppresses their immediate need to feed. This alliance is fragile, however, and in times of stress, the creature's baser urges may rise to the fore.

An outiko may be taken as an Improved Familiar, by a caster of level 7+.

**PERFEKTENNER**

*This monstrous boar snaps enormous elongated jaws filled with razor-sharp teeth, with large, twisted tusks, instantly killing yet another cow in the pasture.*

**PERFEKTENNER****CR 10****XP 9,600**

N Huge magical beast

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, scent; Perception +16**SMA  
C**



**Aura** stench (DC 23, 3 rounds)

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 25, touch 8, flat-footed 25 (+17 natural, -2 size)

**hp** 139 (9d10+90)

**Fort** +17, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

**Defensive Abilities** ferocity; **DR** 5/adamantine; **Resist** cold 5, fire 5

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** bite +17 (2d6+10 plus grab), gore +17 (2d6+10), slam +17 (1d8+10)

**Space** 15ft; **Reach** 10ft

**Special Attacks** swallow whole (2d6 acid, AC 18, 13 hp), trample (2d6+15, DC 24)

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 30 **Dex** 10 **Con** 29 **Int** 2 **Wis** 13 **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +21 (+25 grapple); **CMD** 31 (35 vs. trip)

**Feats** Endurance, Greater Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

**Skills** Perception +16

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** cold, temperate forests, cold and warm deserts

**Organization** solitary, pair or herd (3-8)

**Treasure** none

thought. Even when pushed to the brink of death, the Perfektenner will fight on till the moment their heart stops beating. Such a creature will never retreat, either because they simply lack the intelligence or common sense to do so, or perhaps because they literally can't think of the possibility of their death.

While it is no mystery that the perfektenner are creatures of the mysterious and dangerous plane known as the First World, their origin is unknown. Some believe that beasts from the material plane, such as boars, were taken to the First World where they grew to a monstrous size and temper, while others think they are creatures that have always been native to the First World.

In the First World, Perfektenner can be found almost everywhere; these predatory scavengers roam in small herds finding prey or carrion to eat. Perfektenner often use their size to bully and consume smaller creatures, but should the Perfektenner encounter larger creatures they will act like a pack of wolves, harrowing the larger creature until it dies from exhaustion and wounds delivered by the herd.

Many different breeds of the Perfektenner exist in the First World, from the white-furred hunters of the deep frozen tundra, to the burrowers of the harsh boiling deserts and wastelands. It is widely believed that something changes a perfektenner when it crosses from the First World to Golarion, as only the breed presented above has been found on the Material Plane. Perfektenner found on Golarion are almost bald, with long, wire-like hair sticking out of its brown grey skin. Like most



The perfektenner are among the most brutal creatures ever to roam Golarion. They are massive creatures similar to dire boars, though much larger, fiercer, and tougher than even the meanest of dire boars. Their jaws are elongated similar to the jaws of crocodiles, but with large twisted tusks.

Perfektenner are always hungry, angry, and looking for things to fight or eat. They enjoy eating docile herd animals, such as cows, oxen and sheep. Surprisingly, perfektenner have an aversion to consuming the flesh of intelligent humanoids, only killing them in self-defense, but leaving the corpses uneaten. This makes these beasts especially dangerous to farmers, for they will kill and eat an entire herd, ruining their livelihood, unless the farmer tries to stop them, in which case the perfektenner fights, and usually kills the farmer.

For the Perfektenner attacking prey almost never ends in injury, for they are extremely resilient, shugging off most injuries without much

other breeds, they have yellow tusks and teeth, with a breath that would sicken even sewer dwellers. Perfektenner are found along nations bordering on the Crown of the World, with an unexplained preference for the Land of the Linnorm Kings. Rarely, they can be found in warmer nations to the south, most often having been captured and held as “pets” by those with more platinum than good sense.

Adventurers surviving an encounter with perfektenners have noted these beasts rely on their sense of smell far more than any of their other senses. Curiously, it has been noted that perfektenners are fond of the smell of rotten eggs, but hate the smell of lavender, garlic, and roses. ☹



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# IT'S A CELEBRATION OF PATHFINDER CLASSICS!

In honor of the 5th anniversary of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game, as well as 10 years of Paizo, we invite you to return to your Pathfinder roots! Yes, it is time to go back to your bookshelves, and start rereading your *Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path*, your *Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path*, your *Darkmoon Vale* modules...and expand upon them! Give us your sidetrek into the countryside around Sandpoint, explore the flanks of Droskar's Crag, or uncover new secrets hidden in the Vaults of Korvosa. Pathfinders, tell us your tales!

## Goal

The goal for the fanzine is to create a collection of fan-created articles and supporting art set in Paizo's Pathfinder Chronicles world of Golarion. In conjunction with the anniversary celebration at PaizoCon 2012, Wayfinder #7 will be focusing on Year One of the Pathfinder product line! Please use the products list below as your main references (as well as that handy-dandy PathfinderWiki!) In the case of a plethora of articles on similar subjects, preference will be given to articles that follow this theme. As always, crunch, fiction, and flavor articles are welcome!

In addition, writers can submit to one of several regular series featured in Wayfinder:

- **Advice:** Have some advice you want to pass on to new GMs or players to the world of Golarion?
- **Bestiary:** New creatures to terrorize your PCs with!
- **Of Chance and Skill:** Games, new to or adapted for Golarion, to play at your table!
- **Prestigious:** This article is devoted to a new prestige class for the world of Golarion.
- **Realm Building:** The Kingmaker Adventure Path introduced a lot of new goodies for building armies, cities and kingdoms. This column is focused on building upon those rules.
- **Side Treks:** Side Treks feature short outlines for a sidetrek adventure set in a particular Pathfinder adventure, from the products listed below. One sidetrek outline per submission for this column. Please reference earlier Wayfinders for the layout for this article. Submission size: 325 words.
- **Tales from the Front:** Fiction articles based on any of Paizo's adventure modules or paths.
- **Weal or Woe?** Two NPCs (including statblocks), one helpful, one not so much. Include hooks for the PCs to know (or hate) this NPC and how to use them in a campaign. Include a boon (Weal) and drawback (Woe) for the NPCs in your article.

## Guidelines

- Thou shalt not disregard canon, thou shalt build upon it.
- Keep in mind thy audience. Keep it PG-13. No slash fic/porn fantasies,

cheesecake/beefcake/fan service.

- Short and sweet. Unless otherwise specified, article sizes are 750 and 1,500 words. These are HARD targets, not a range, so come as close as possible to these targets. Anything over 1,500 words will have to be pre-approved by the Editor-in-Chief.
- Submissions used to defame, harass, or threaten board members are not tolerated.

## Submission Instructions

- **Conditions for Submissions.** All authors and artists must agree to have their works reproduced for this and other Wayfinder products, be it for translations into other languages (we will be responsible for the truthfulness of the translations), special publications, or use on a Wayfinder website. All of Wayfinder's publications are NON-PROFIT, and authors and artists will be given proper credit where due.
- Send all submissions to: [wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com](mailto:wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com) with the subject line containing "Wayfinder #7 Submission".
- All text submissions must be submitted in DOC format (doesn't matter if you use Office or OpenOffice). Note: Files sent in RTF, TXT, DOCX, or any other format than DOC will be rejected.
  - o Do not use fancy fonts or colors or styles for formatting - these will get stripped out in the editing and layout process. Use the standard body font for the program you're using - bold and italics are fine.
  - o For tables, please make them tab delimited. Fancy formatted tables just get reduced to this format anyway.
- Include your name and board name in your submission - example, "Liz 'Lilith' Courts". Your entries will go through editing passes for clarity and concision. Depending on time constraints, you may or may not receive feedback on the editing process and your script.
- **DEADLINE: March 31, 2012, 11:59 Pacific.** All entries will be handled on a first come, first serve basis. Some articles may be rejected depending on the final size of the PDF.

## Advertising

- Fan projects operating under Paizo's Community Use Policy are welcome to advertise their websites and materials.
- Third party publishers wishing to advertise their Pathfinder Roleplaying Game-compatible projects in Wayfinder #7 are welcome to advertise as well. Space is available for 1/4, 1/2 and full page ads.
- Email [wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com](mailto:wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com) for questions about placing an ad. Be sure to include "Wayfinder #7 Advertising" in your subject line.
- **DEADLINE: April 30, 2012**

## Paizo – Year One Products

Module D1: Crown of the Kobold King	Module W2: River into Darkness
Module D1.5: Revenge of the Kobold King	Module W3: Flight of the Red Raven
Module D2: Seven Swords of Sin	Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords
Module D3: The Demon Within	Rise of the Runelords Player's Guide
Module E1: Carnival of Tears	
Module J1: Entombed with the Pharaohs	Adventure Path: Curse of the Crimson Throne
Module J2: Guardians of Dragonfall	Curse of the Crimson Throne Player's Guide
Module J3: Crucible of Chaos	
Module LB1: Tower of the Last Baron	
Module TC1: Into the Haunted Forest	
Module U1: Gallery of Evil	Classic Monsters Revisited
Module U2: Hangman's Noose	Guide to Darkmoon Vale
Module W1: Conquest of Bloodsworn	Guide to Korvosa
Vale	Harrow Deck





**Goal**

The goal of this call for art submissions is to create a feature article in Wayfinder #7 that displays the artistic talents of Pathfinder fans.

Wayfinder #7 will be accepting *all art submissions that deal with the Pathfinder setting*. Some pieces may be used to fill up space throughout the magazine. Many, however, will be included in a special gallery article that will be featured in the PDF version only. So feel free to give us your best!

But first, we have a few rules...

**Guidelines**

- Keep in mind thy audience. Keep it PG-13. No cheesecake/beefcake/fan service.

- Thou shalt not infringe upon other Intellectual Properties. No illustrating Batman meets Valeros, or even a Drizzt-looking drow. Keep it in Golarion.

- Wayfinder seeks new, original black and white or color art to feature in its pages. Please refrain from submitting material that has already been published elsewhere.

**Submission Instructions**

- Conditions for Submissions. All artists must agree to have their works reproduced for this and other Wayfinder products, be it for translations into other languages (we will be responsible for the truthfulness of the translations), special publications, or use on a Wayfinder website or gallery website (such as DeviantArt). All of Wayfinder's publications are NON-PROFIT, and authors and artists will be given proper credit where due.

- Send all submissions to: [wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com](mailto:wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com) with the subject line containing "Wayfinder #7 Art Submission".

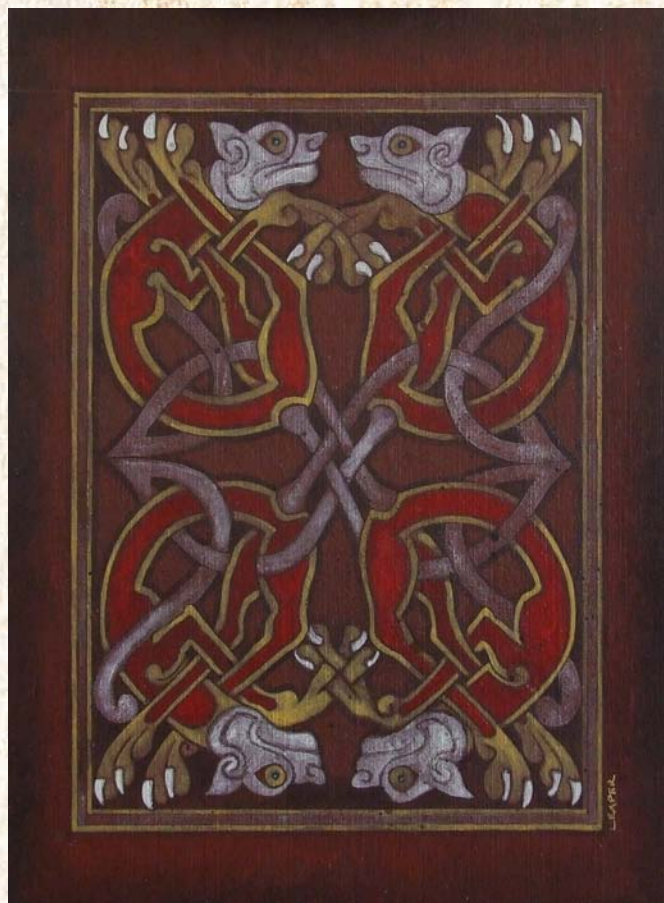
- Art submissions can be in color or black/white.

- All art submissions should be .psd, .png, .jpg or .tiff files. 300 dpi. 8.5 x11 size max. Note: Files that are sent in any other format will be rejected.

- Include your name and board name with your submission - example, "Liz 'Lilith' Courts". Your entries will be compiled and selected by the editorial staff. You will be notified if your submission has been selected.

- **DEADLINE: April 15, 2012, 11:59 Pacific.** All entries will be handled on a first come, first serve basis.

Any questions can be asked on the Paizo.com messageboards (we'll have a thread up), or email your questions to: [wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com](mailto:wayfinder.fanzine@gmail.com)



FAN ART:  
CHRIS LEAPER





# Delve Deeper!



Explore your character's origins with the *Advanced Race Guide*, the exciting new sourcebook for the smash-hit Pathfinder Roleplaying Game! Try out new archetypes, feats, spells, gear, and racial traits for all seven "core" races, as well as expanded options for every single player-character-appropriate race ever introduced for the Pathfinder RPG, or use the book's extensive race creation rules to create your own unique race! At last, goblins, rat folk, orcs, kobolds, and the rest stand toe-to-toe with elves, dwarves, and humans in this option-packed 256-page hardcover rulebook!

## PATHFINDER ADVANCED RACE GUIDE

AVAILABLE SPRING 2012!



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